LC268
.L72
copy 3

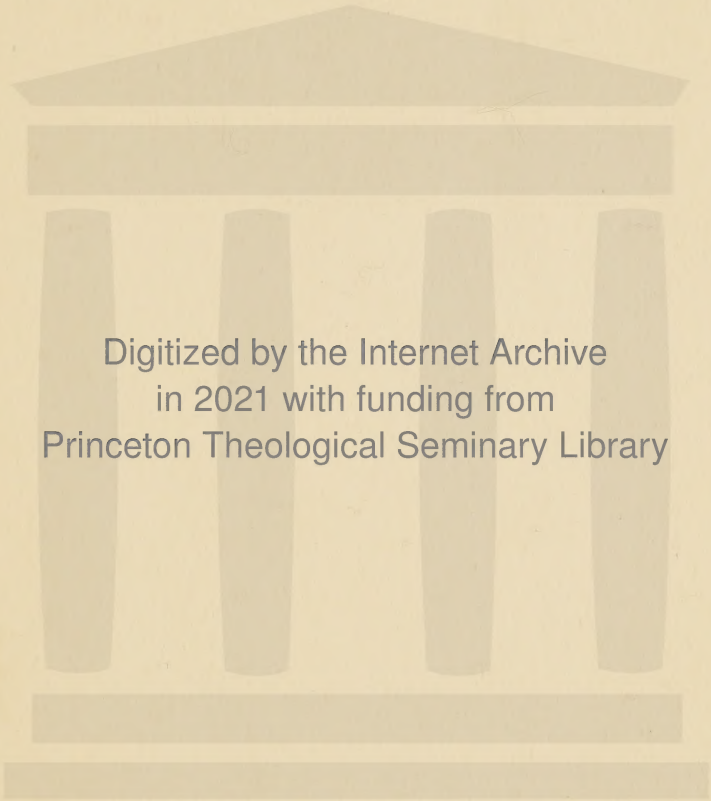
The
Charles G. Reigner

Education Reading Room

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
JAN 20 1953
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

LC268
.L72
copy 3


Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2021 with funding from
Princeton Theological Seminary Library

https://archive.org/details/greatergeneratio00ligo

A GREATER GENERATION

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
NEW YORK • BOSTON • CHICAGO
DALLAS • ATLANTA • SAN FRANCISCO

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
LONDON • BOMBAY • CALCUTTA
MADRAS • MELBOURNE

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
OF CANADA, LIMITED
TORONTO

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
JAN 20 1953
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A GREATER GENERATION

ERNEST M. LIGON

Author of "The Psychology of Christian Personality" and "Their Future Is Now"

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

New York *1950*

COPYRIGHT, 1948, BY ERNEST M. LIGON

All rights reserved—no part of this book may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the publisher, except by a reviewer who wishes to quote brief passages in connection with a review written for inclusion in magazine or newspaper.

Fourth Printing 1950

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

to

THE CO-AUTHORS

parents, teachers, ministers, scientists,
philanthropists, leaders of youth,
youth themselves, and the many staff
workers in the Laboratory, the churches,
and other organizations who have contributed
to the development of the Union College
Character Research Project.

PREFACE

This book is a description of the methods and principles of character education which have been developed in the Union College Character Research Project. Parents and teachers, ministers and leaders of youth, educators and students in large numbers ask about this approach. This volume represents an attempt to answer their questions simply. As church schools, YMCA's, private and public schools, and other character building organizations consider using our materials and methods, they want to know as much as possible about the basic principles of the Project and how to put them into practice. Since parents must expose their children to some form of character education, they should be fully informed, not only as to the foundations on which it is built, but as to their part in the process of using it. This book has been written primarily as an answer to their questions. It is hoped that every parent interested in character education will read this book carefully and then decide whether or not he wants this type of training for his children.

It is a firm conviction of the author that the laws of character development are as definite a part of the very nature of things as the laws of the physical universe. Therefore they are to be discovered by research, not invented by personal opinion. So much has been discovered in recent years by the scientific study of child development that great strides can now be made toward more effective character education. The Union College Project has grown out of the faith that a greater generation is not only possible but that it can be achieved now.

The only part of the book in which the layman may have some difficulty with the technical aspects of the problem is in Chapter III, which has to do with trait theory. Character is a very complex phenomenon, and trait theory is its most complex aspect. It has

been presented in the simplest way it could be, to give the layman some intelligent insight into its nature. In the examination of any form of character education, the psychologist would look first at the trait theory used. Our program has been built in such a way that the only assumptions made in the actual process of developing the curriculum are those which all authorities accept. Hypotheses which go beyond this are not so used as to invalidate our methods if they should prove to be untenable. For example, if all of our major trait and factor groups should prove incorrect, it would hardly affect our curriculum except for a rearrangement or regrouping of the lessons into new groupings.

One basic assumption which underlies our Project is that the building of a greater generation on the foundation of Christian character is so vital a task in our present world crisis that it behooves all Christendom to unite in achieving it. We have, therefore, as far as possible, avoided those things which divide us. The theology which underlies our curriculum involves faith in a Father God, the power of the Cross in the principle of vicarious sacrifice, the great ethical principles taught by Jesus and their potential power in building a better world, and other such basic concepts on which all Christians can agree.

This does not mean that everyone examining the evidence now available for discovering the laws of character education will interpret it alike. This will certainly not be the case. Nevertheless, if all of us are honestly and eagerly seeking the truth with open minds, we will eventually come together in our thinking. We cannot resolve our differences by argument, but we can by objective and rigorous research. There is an abundance of intelligence and training among our leaders in religion and education. They could make great discoveries rapidly if all would seek them in true poverty of spirit, hungering and thirsting for righteousness.

My indebtedness in writing this book is to so many people connected with the Project that a complete list would include literally hundreds of names. Even in the actual preparation of this manuscript a number of people participated. Among those who read the manuscript and offered invaluable suggestions are: Dr. Carter

Davidson, President of Union College; Dr. Leonard A. Stidley, Professor in the Graduate School of Theology, Oberlin College; Dr. William C. Schwarzbek, Psychologist of the General Electric Company; Dr. Kenneth B. Welles, Pastor of the Westminster Presbyterian Church, Albany, New York; Rev. Bertram deHeus Atwood, Pastor of the First Reformed Church, Schenectady, New York; Rev. Francis W. Trimmer, Pastor of the Emmanuel Baptist Church, Schenectady, New York; Dr. Charles A. Godcharles, Department of Psychology, Union College; Messrs. Richard S. Doty, Mervyn M. Morse, and Joseph R. Bogle, Research Fellows, Laboratory of Psychology, Union College, Schenectady, New York; and my secretary, Miss Celia A. Larned. Mrs. Robert J. Smith, Research Assistant, also made important contributions. The painstaking work in editing the manuscript on the part of my wife, Lois W. Ligon, has been almost entirely responsible for the positive aspects of its literary quality. The materials of the book have been given as lectures to many groups. A part of it constituted two lectures on the Mead-Swing Foundation at Oberlin College in May 1947.

ERNEST M. LIGON

February 1948

CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE vii

Part I: THE ROLE OF SCIENCE IN THE PROBLEM OF CHARACTER

CHAPTER

I. IS A GREATER GENERATION POSSIBLE? 3

II. MINIMUM ESSENTIALS: HEARERS TO DOERS . . . 9

III. MINIMUM ESSENTIALS: DEFINITE AIMS 19

IV. MINIMUM ESSENTIALS: WHEN CAN WE TEACH WHAT? 28

V. MINIMUM ESSENTIALS: THE PERSONAL EQUATION . 35

VI. MINIMUM ESSENTIALS: YOU CANNOT CHANGE HUMAN NATURE 44

VII. MINIMUM ESSENTIALS: SEVEN DAYS A WEEK . . 49

VIII. MINIMUM ESSENTIALS: BY THEIR FRUITS 53

IX. PROBABILITIES 56

Part II: THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE PROBLEM OF CHARACTER

X. THE ROLE OF RELIGION 65

XI. THE NATURE OF THE CHRISTIAN DESIGN OF CHARACTER 70

CHAPTER PAGE

XII. The Christian Hypothesis 76

XIII. Teaching Christian Character: Tried and Found Wanting 83

XIV. Teaching Christian Character: New Procedures 89

XV. Teaching Christian Character: Wrought by Prayer 100

XVI. Question Marks: Houses or Homes 106

XVII. Question Marks: It Takes Time to Teach . . 118

XVIII. Question Marks: You Are Only Young Once . . 128

XIX. Question Marks: The Church Could 139

Index 151

A GREATER GENERATION

PART I

THE ROLE OF SCIENCE IN THE PROBLEM OF CHARACTER

Chapter I

IS A GREATER GENERATION POSSIBLE?

Suppose that Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, Martin Luther, William Harvey, Oliver Cromwell, Nicholas Copernicus, Andrew Jackson, and Michael Faraday were all students in your local high school this year! If your high school is of average size, more than two hundred, and your community of average intelligence, as far as native endowment is concerned that probably is actually the case every year.[1] In one young people's group of less than a hundred to whom tests had been given, this group of distinguished men and as many more were matched in intelligence.

Nowadays it is high I.Q. which most people would consider as rather to be chosen than great riches. Actually, as the volume of our research data increases, it is becoming more and more evident that I.Q. is not only not the only factor in achievement, it is not even the most important one. It is probable that when we have developed highly reliable measures of the strength of character, it will be found that character correlates higher with achievement than does I.Q. Quoting from the same study on which the preceding statements have been based, "Youths who achieve eminence are characterized not only by high intellectual traits, but also by persistence of motive and effort, confidence in their abilities, and great strength or force of character." [2]

A careful examination of this important study forces us to the conclusion that it is character, not native endowment, which we most lack. *Using as criteria the highest estimates,* reported in

[1] Genetic Studies of Genius. Volume II, *The Early Mental Traits of Three Hundred Geniuses,* Part II, pp. 223–710, Catherine Marie Cox. Stanford University Press, Stanford University, California, 1926.

[2] *Ibid.,* p. 218.

the study, *of the intelligence of Abraham Lincoln and George Washington,*[3] *there are approximately a million and a half people in the United States today more highly endowed intellectually than either of them.* Furthermore, there are probably thirty million people in our country of sufficient native endowments that they could match the achievements of this group of distinguished men and women of history.

The great thinkers of all ages have tried to describe the laws of human character. Yet *man's strength of character has attained not more than one-third of its inherited potential.* This holds for our best leadership as well as for the general population. The present stature of our world leadership is certainly not sufficient to build a stable social order. Nor will it be improved by continuing to use our present methods of character education, not even a superior version of them. Neither can we be content with just a general improvement or revision of present methods. Our approach must be entirely different, as different as our great automobile industry differs from the village blacksmith shop. The day of solving the problems of character by opinion, however learned, is or should be past.

"You cannot change human nature." This is probably the most widely accepted theory of human potential ever stated. Even those who do not profess to believe it, actually surrender to it in their attitude toward life in general and people in particular. The meaning of this dogma, however, is far from being the same for everyone who asserts it. Interpretations range from that held by biologists, who are simply stating on the basis of abundant scientific evidence that the probabilities of changing the hereditary characteristics of man are very remote indeed, to the depressive thinking of the philosophical pessimist who asserts that man's selfishness and cruelty are an unchangeable part of his inherited nature. People's beliefs as to what this unchangeable human nature consists of also range from man's inherited drives and aptitudes to his habit of making war or his tendency to get as much as possible for as little as possible. The fact is, we do not need to change

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 325, 345.

human nature. We need only to use a greater part of the human potential with which the Lord endowed us.

Let us set forth certain hypotheses concerning this "unchangeable human nature" and describe the evidence supporting them. In the first place, there can be little doubt that the biological nature of man is relatively unchangeable. No significant mutations have occurred in human nature for a long time. It is improbable that they will in the near future. That much is true; in this sense, you cannot change human nature. However, our use of our biological potential in terms of wholesome personality and strong character is certainly not more than one-third efficient. Look at the evidence in support of this hypothesis!

Anyone familiar with the research of the last fifty years in psychology can estimate how much we could learn during our youth if all the laws of learning were obeyed. He can appreciate the vast differences there would be in our emotional weaknesses—fears, angers, hates, suspicions, greed—if our present knowledge in mental hygiene and the psychology of adjustment were applied. He can also evaluate our potential social effectiveness if the research in social skills and methods of social adjustment were used in the training of our children. Finally, he is well able to calculate how often modern methods in vocational guidance and industrial psychology could prevent our present placing of square pegs in round holes, and give men the thrill and satisfaction of achievement in their jobs. It follows that *the methods are now available making it possible to bring up a greater generation* of men of good will with strong character sufficient for the task of world leadership so needed today to save our civilization from the destruction toward which it seems so obviously headed, finer men and women capable of living happy useful lives. It is the thesis of this book that *this can be accomplished through the application of the scientific method and the concepts of the Christian religion.*

The scientific method can make as remarkable contributions toward discovering God's laws for character education as it

has in finding His will in the natural universe. These laws will never be discovered by opinion, however expert, around the conference table. They will be found and applied if we turn our best energies to the objective method of science and use it. Jesus proposed what is substantially the scientific method. When asked how to distinguish between true and false prophets, he did not resort to opinion nor to authority but answered, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

In this day of emergency it should be pointed out that the scientific method is the quickest as well as the most effective road to progress. One could have traveled from Rome to Athens in 1000 B.C. just as rapidly as our forefathers could cover a similar distance in the early days of our country, almost three thousand years later. John Wesley had few advantages in travel facilities over Paul. Yet now we can cross the continent in a few hours. When our Civil War ended it was weeks before the news reached the whole country. But we all were able to hear the Japanese surrender as it occurred in Tokyo Bay at the end of World War II. Whence these remarkable changes? The answer is the scientific method made them possible. It can do the same thing in character education. Rigorously applied, it will make it possible for us to obtain for our children the enormous power and the great happiness so evidently inherent in the teachings of Jesus.

One of the great values of the scientific method is its ability to detect quickly and accurately "trees which do not bring forth good fruit." This is especially valuable in character education. Probably no phase of human activity has been besieged by more theories than character education. The astonishing fact is that some of them have been used for a thousand years which could have been proven futile by the scientific method in a decade at most. It is amazing how often we are blind even to invariable evidence. For example, when an older child strikes his younger brother or sister, many a parent in turn strikes him, saying as he does so, "This will teach you to realize how it feels to be hit." It is highly probable that this method has never been successful in increasing

brotherly love even once in all of human history. Yet it must have been tried millions of times through all the years. Surely no scientist has ever needed even a small fraction of that many failures to be convinced of the falsity of any hypothesis. The secret of the effectiveness of the scientific method is simple. It makes it possible for us to distinguish quickly between the true and false prophets among our ideas. We make progress with astonishing rapidity in physics and chemistry, because we follow the evidence, not our opinions. No scientist worth his salt would hesitate for a minute to abandon even his most cherished concept, if confronted with clear evidence of its falsity. We shall not discover the great social and spiritual laws unless we subordinate our man-made theories to the objective evidence of God's will.

The trademark of the scientific method is measurement. Its ideal is truth. Subscribing to the dictum that "whatever exists, exists in some amount and can be measured," measurement is as necessary for the full mastery of the laws of character as for the laws of physics. With respect to some of its variables we may be able to define only their major divisions. Measurement begins, however, as soon as any group can be divided into two categories, such as good and bad, strong and weak, confident and shy. There are highly developed statistical procedures which can be used when such dichotomies represent the limits of our accuracy. This needs to be emphasized, for there are many who think that measurement is impossible in certain phases of character education, simply because such rough classifications are often the best we can do at first. But even with such simple divisions as these, the scientific method can be used and is still vastly superior to the obvious futility of subjective opinion.

It should also be emphasized that we must be constantly searching for more and more accurate methods of measurement. Fully half of the research in our Laboratory is toward this end. The fact is that science progresses in proportion to the accuracy of its measurements. The atom bomb would never have been created with the physical methods available to Michael

Faraday. Why is this true? It is because the interacting forces of nature are so intricate in their behavior that only increasingly delicate measurements can discover all their laws of action. It is almost analogous to focusing a microscope. Until the point of exact focus is reached, the picture is blurred and easily misinterpreted. Michael Faraday spent years trying to discover what any college sophomore today would find out in his first laboratory period, simply because Faraday's galvanometer was too crude to reveal the phenomenon for which he was seeking.

So it is with character. *It is certain that there are laws of character development which are just as inviolable and powerful as the laws of nature.* No one will question the fact that many of these laws are probably even more complex and intricate than those that govern our natural phenomena. *We shall certainly not discover them with less painstaking research than that which has characterized physics and chemistry.*

Chapter II *Minimum Essentials*

HEARERS TO DOERS

One of the first major contributions of the method of science in any new field is in making clear *a number of basic conditions which must be satisfied before any important results can be obtained.* Scientific research in character education, as such, is relatively new. In the fields of both psychology and education, however, many hundreds of investigations have revealed data of great importance in helping to discover the laws of character development. The work of the Union College Character Research Project [1] has been built on the solid foundation of the findings of these studies. Also, existing methods in character education as well as the wealth of thinking throughout the history of education in general and of religious education in particular, have played their part in the developing of our project. They have helped both by their strengths and by their weaknesses in making our task possible. After a decade of intensive study, we have found a number of basic conditions which absolutely must be satisfied if any significant results are to be obtained. It cannot be said with certainty that these are all such conditions there are. There may be others. But it can be said with considerable confidence that unless these conditions are fulfilled we shall not do effective character education. This cannot be overemphasized.

The laws of character, by and large, are as interdependent as the laws of electricity. In installing a lighting system, even though several thousand dollars worth of equipment is used, the overlooking of a ten-cent fuse results in total darkness. It may not be quite that hopeless in character education, but it is true that there are certain major laws, the failure to obey any one of which will result

[1] Further information concerning the methods of this project can be obtained by writing to Union College Character Research Project, Laboratory of Psychology, Union College, Schenectady 8, New York.

in very poor returns on our investment. It behooves parents, teachers, and other leaders who guide our children, to learn what these minimum essentials are and to make sure that all of them are fulfilled in the methods they employ in attempting to guide the character development of these children. Institutions and agencies which profess to build character in our children should be investigated carefully to be sure that they are satisfying these conditions before we entrust our children to them. This is simply putting into actual practice Jesus' statement, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

What, then, are these minimum essentials for effective character education? Education of any sort is concerned primarily with learning. It is not surprising, therefore, that our first basic principle should have to do with learning. It may sound like ordinary common sense. It is this. *In teaching children, the laws of learning must be obeyed if they are to learn.* This is true whether the subject matter is Latin, the Bible, or Christian attitudes.

Let us look at these laws of learning as they affect character education. When Jesus said, "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only," he covered a lot of territory. The distance from hearers to doers is very considerable. But this command will not be carried out as the result of repeated admonitions or by appeals to duty. *There are at least five major steps in the learning process all of which must be taken before we can be sure that our houses are built on foundations of solid rock and not on shifting sand.* The very term "character" implies the last of these five steps. Unless it is taken, there has been no character education, as such, at all. Parents, teachers, ministers, educators, youth leaders, and youth itself ought to learn these five steps thoroughly and make sure that all of them are involved in any educational programs in which they or their children are concerned.

1. *The first step can be called, exposure.* It is what Jesus referred to as "being hearers of the word." Exposure is a beginning, but it is only a beginning. Unless it is followed by the other four steps, its value is negligible. This is so obvious as to sound trite. Yet, an astonishingly high percentage of our religious and adult education especially, gets no further than this.

Let us consider our common garden variety of religious education, or for that matter, a good share of our modern adult education. Most of it never gets beyond this first step, exposure. Suppose we invited Dr. Fosdick or some other great teacher to give us a series of lectures on the Gospel according to St. Mark, one chapter each week for sixteen weeks. We attend every time. But we make no preparation, no recitation, take no notes, have no review, and no examination. How much would we learn of permanent value? Of course, there are individual differences, but for most of us, within a few months, it would be almost as if we had never heard the lectures. We would have had some fine inspiration, acquired a deep admiration for the teacher, and a profound respect for Mark and his subject. But of usable, permanent knowledge we would have gained almost none. The laws of learning must be obeyed if we are to learn. And the first of them is, that exposure is only the beginning of learning, not the whole of it.

2. *The second step is repetition.* The so-called "photographic mind" is for the most part a myth. For the vast majority of us, ideas must be repeated many times, even if all we want is to remember them. There are, of course, individual differences as to how many repetitions are necessary. Also, the nature of the material is an important factor. Furthermore, the timing of these repetitions is important. If they are spaced a month apart, for instance, the number of repetitions required for permanent learning would be very large indeed.

The fact is that there are optimum intervals for repetition necessary in order to get the greatest efficiency in learning. If material is studied one day, reviewed at intervals of two days, five days, ten days, and twenty days successively—again allowing for individual differences—it is far more likely to be retained permanently than if twice that number of repetitions are spaced a month or even a week apart.

The implications of this are often disillusioning and make us a bit apprehensive about the value of many if not most of our college courses. For example, a college student takes a course in, say, psychology. At the end of each month he is given an

hour test on that month's work. At the end of each semester he is given an examination. For each of these hour tests and examinations he crams feverishly. How much of the content of the course will he know a year later? The answer is, a negligible amount. He has disobeyed an important phase of the law of repetition. And the laws of learning must be obeyed if we are to learn. If this is true of our formal education, in which some repetition does occur, consider its implications for courses in which there is no repetition at all. Think also of what little chance the church school has without the coöperation of the home.

Many of our church schools are called Bible schools. The Bible is no more easily learned than any other subject. Yet, our teachers are often not well trained. We have only fifty to sixty per cent attendance. There is usually no preparation, little recitation, virtually no review and no examination. *It is not astonishing that our present college-age youth are religiously illiterate. It would be a miracle if they were otherwise.* Material must be studied thoroughly and repeated frequently to be learned. In our Character Research Project we have often devoted a whole term to mastering a single chapter in the Bible. The Lord's Prayer and its various petitions enter into more than four hundred lessons. Children do learn when the law of repetition is thus effectively applied.

3. *The third step is understanding.* Even when sufficient repetition has been carried out to make at least remembering possible, the full learning process has still barely begun. To be able to recite passages from the Bible from memory, is no guarantee that one knows what they mean. Most adults could recite the Beatitudes easily. Probably a very small percentage indeed understand their full implications. A student of mine once recited very glibly a technical principle in psychology. When asked what it meant, he replied, "I haven't a ghost of an idea."

The philosophy of Jesus and the social and spiritual laws which govern the universe are quite as complex and difficult as the natural laws. They will not be mastered more easily. To

describe the social laws by stating that "all one needs to do is to practice the Golden Rule" shows the same lack of depth of understanding as to state the laws of gravitation by saying that "all that goes up must come down." The Bible is not easily learned. Yet much of it is taught long before it can possibly be understood. In recent years, however, our curriculum planners have tried to grade material according to its fitness for the age level. But such a process is a very difficult one. It will not be achieved around a conference table, but by careful and laborious research studies with the children themselves. For example, the upper high school and college age level has been found to be the earliest age at which the philosophy of Jesus and the spiritual laws of the universe can be taught and understood. The twelve-year-old can no more learn them than he can understand the principles of the Calculus or Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason.* Learning has not been completed, in any sense significant for character, until understanding has been achieved.

4. *The fourth step is conviction.* Unless children accept the basic principles of action implied in the spiritual laws, they certainly will not practice them with enthusiasm. However, it is not easy to recognize that vicarious sacrifice is superior to self-interest. Most children find it difficult to see achievement as a greater source of happiness than fun. High school youth are a bit skeptical—if they think about it at all—concerning the prophets being happy because they were persecuted. The spiritual laws are seldom superficially comprehended. It requires deep insight to discern their power and much inspiration to challenge youth to embrace them. The fact remains that conviction, or acceptance, is a necessary step if character education is to be effective.

5. *The fifth and last step is application.* This is Jesus' concept of being "doers of the word." It is almost synonymous with character itself. Until principles are actually put into practice and become the guiding motivations in one's daily life, they cannot be considered a part of his character at all. One may understand a principle, and accept it with enthusiasm and still not apply it. I have seen college students study the laws of learning, understand them perfectly, see their enormous value, and not use them

even in the process of learning them, much less in the rest of their college work.

However, the will to apply a principle is not necessarily accompanied by the ability to do so. Recent research has shown that mastery of principles is a positive but negligible predictor of ability to apply those principles. A student may recite the laws of learning and have no idea what they mean. He may understand their meaning but have no ability, even if he has the inclination, to apply them to his own work. Spiritual principles are not effective in character until they operate in one's daily life. Character is one's mode of living. "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord . . . but he that doeth the will of the Father." The methods of the Character Research Project are all being developed on the assumption that we have not produced effective character education until the spiritual principles of Jesus have become a part of the daily lives of our children.

This last step in learning, application, especially the second part of it concerning ability, cannot be over-emphasized. Much of our character education, particularly religious education, has failed because this last step was not achieved. For example, let us consider the principle of vicarious sacrifice. A description of our efforts to teach it in the Character Research Project will show how difficult it is to achieve this fifth step.

There is abundant reason for believing that the principle of vicarious sacrifice, the lesson of the Cross, could be the social force which would actually bring peace on earth and good will among men. It does not require much proving that our generation is not over-burdened with it. There may have been generations more completely dedicated to self-interest, but it is difficult to imagine how. All of us who have grown up in Christian churches have learned to say, "He who would come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me"; "Love your enemies"; "Pray for them that despitefully use you"; "Go sell all that thou hast and give to the poor." We have said them, sung them, and prayed them, but the understanding of them has been far less common, and the practice of them so rare as to be negligible.

In teaching vicarious sacrifice in the Character Research Proj-

ect it was realized at once that even if the great passages of scripture and literature on the subject are memorized, we have only scratched the surface. Their resounding words are inspiring and we find them sources of strength in time of trouble, but they are clearly not enough to make us able to do the will of the Father. So to augment them we sought examples of vicarious sacrifice, usually from biography. The lives of Jesus, Paul, Peter, St. Francis, Wycliff, Huss, Wesley, Livingston, Grenfell, Carver, and scores of others added further understanding and inspiration. But even this still did not result in its application to daily life. Children thrill to these stories, but they cannot practice them, because they are not applicable to their own problems.

Therefore, at the present time we are seeking diligently for practical examples from the everyday lives of our children. Hundreds of parents and children are helping us find them. One father sent in a report about his junior-high son, who was studying the unit on vicarious sacrifice in the church school. The boy had a Saturday morning job of taking the week's accumulation of papers from the cellar and burning them. One morning a neighbor boy kicked them all down as fast as he could pile them up. The father says that his own succinct recommendation to his son was, "Sock him!" His son's astounding reply was, "Dad, I don't think that is the way to do it." Knowing from the frequent battles between the two boys that this was not motivated by fear, the father decided to find out what was the way to do it. His son finally solved the problem this way. He remembered that the other boy also had a Saturday morning job. He said to him, "If you'll help me do my job, I'll help you do your job." The father finished his report by saying, "I've gone to church all my life, but for practical religion, I'll have to take off my hat to my son."

This simple but moving story has helped and can help scores of other children apply the principle of vicarious sacrifice. Right now we are seeking hundreds of these daily life examples of applying the principles of Jesus. We are beginning to see a real effect on character. The task is just begun. We need thousands of boys and girls and men and women who will help us solve

these problems. But at last we are finding methods of making the principles of Jesus actually a part of the characters of our boys and girls. Because they have learned how to "do these sayings of mine," perhaps they will grow up to build the solid social structures which our generation failed to do because we "heard them but did them not."

The chances of learning how to do this without using the methods of science are negligible. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Once an intelligent, serious-minded committee was charged with the responsibility of developing a character education program for the public schools of a city. The committee decided around a conference table what virtues they considered desirable for their children. Then they had some posters made to announce their findings and put them up in all the schools of the city. This is the simplest type of character education program that could be devised. The children of the schools, I am told, brought the program to an end almost as rapidly as it had been formulated. This is an extreme case in terms of the lack of scientific method.

It needs to be emphasized that calling a thing scientific, or an experiment, or research does not make it so. The scientific method is very definite and demanding. When a character education procedure is offered to us as scientific, we should make sure that it is. Let us recall briefly how the scientific method is applied to educational procedures. Here is the general form of attack on such problems. We first decide what objectives we are trying to achieve. We then measure our subjects as to their status with respect to these objectives before beginning our proposed training. Next we apply our training to one group and not to another group. At the end of the training period we measure both groups again. Then we evaluate the effectiveness of our training by how much further the first group, which received our training, has progressed toward our objectives than the second, which did not receive this training. Such experiments are difficult to carry out. For example, the two groups must be as nearly alike as possible in such characteristics as intelligence, socio-economic status, and so on. Also there are many other char-

acteristics of scientific procedure which must be present in valid research. This necessity for a control group, however, the layman ought to know about and look for.

Here is a brief description of how a single attitude is selected and taught, using the scientific method. First, it is tested by all the methods we know in psychology to find out whether it has any psychological validity in human nature. At least three-fourths of all the traits suggested in history for character education have no real meaning in human personality at all. This statement is based on a great deal of research beginning with the Character Education Inquiry, previously referred to and summarized effectively in a volume of the year book of the Department of Superintendence.[2] Next, careful studies are made to discover at what age level the concepts involved can be understood, and the emotional and social maturity of the child make it adaptable to his motivations. Then large numbers of children are studied to find out in what forms of behavior the attitude shows itself in their daily lives. Now, it is time to construct some tentative curricular materials and projects, designed to teach the attitude. These materials are tried out with many groups and their effectiveness measured. If they do teach the attitude, they become a part of a relatively permanent curriculum. If not, they are discarded and new materials are developed. In the Character Research Project we spent ten years developing a reasonably satisfactory attitude program using this procedure. We then constructed a tentative curriculum. A new revision of it is made every two years, on the basis of tested results, designed to include materials and methods which have been proved successful. Yes, it is a long way from hearers to doers of the word.

These five steps in the learning process are so basic that we ask the parents and teachers in the institutions coöperating in our project to be constantly evaluating their efforts in terms of them. For example, the parents are asked to submit a weekly report on their efforts to teach the lesson assigned for that

[2] Department of Superintendence, Tenth Yearbook, CHARACTER EDUCATION. The Department of Superintendence, Washington, D.C., 1932. Chapter V.

week. The questions which they attempt to answer follow.

1. *Exposure.* Did your child listen willingly to the lesson material or was it necessary to persuade him? When did you find him most receptive, and how did you present the material? How could this lesson be improved to make it more attractive to your child?

2. *Repetition.* Were you able to present this material to the child sufficiently frequently that there was some chance of his remembering it? Describe your methods of doing so.

3. *Understanding.* Do you think your child fully understands the ideas presented in this lesson? Quote his own words as far as possible in answering this.

4. *Conviction.* Do you think your child is thoroughly convinced of the value of the trait emphasis of this lesson, so that he will use it with enthusiasm in his daily life? How did you have to modify or add to the lesson materials to bring this about for your particular child?

5. *Application.* In how many different relevant situations of the child's daily life were you able to stimulate him to apply the principle being taught? Describe each one.

Here then is the first minimum essential for effective character education. The laws of learning must be obeyed if our children are to become "doers of the word and not hearers only."

Chapter III *Minimum Essentials*

DEFINITE AIMS

If one examines the materials and methods of the Union College Character Research Project, the feature which will be most obvious is its emphasis on a precise and definite attitude goal list. Every lesson plan has an attitude goal as its central purpose. Every story, every discussion, every project is directed toward that goal. How did this come about? The answer is that when we applied the scientific method to our task, this is where the evidence led us.

The second basic essential, therefore, which objective evidence has convinced us is necessary for effective character education is that we must have very definite aims to be achieved. We found that unless we know precisely where we are going, we are not likely to get there. Certainly none of us anticipated the extremes to which the evidence would lead us in this respect. And we see no indication that the end is yet in sight. Furthermore, character traits seem to be about the most difficult goals in the world at which to aim. We have found that it has to be done very precisely or we miss the mark badly. It became obvious in the very beginning that repeated admonitions to "be good," or to "follow the teachings of Jesus," or to "practice the Golden Rule" are far from constituting an adequate form of character education. Vague, high-sounding platitudes seem to be as ineffective as they are trite. Our first major research task, then, was to search for goals. It occupied the greater part of the first ten years of our work.

This at once brings into the picture the knotty problem of trait theory. This requires a brief excursion into the most technical phases of modern psychology. In the pages which follow, the layman may find the discussion fairly complex at times.

Nevertheless, parents, teachers and others concerned with character education ought to have at least an awareness of these new techniques. Let us, therefore, describe briefly the steps by which our attitude list was formulated. Then, a few of these new techniques can be stated which will show how our methods have been developed.

The scientific method does not formulate hypotheses, but tests and refines them. It was necessary, therefore, to set forth an initial hypothesis of character. The one to which our work has been dedicated is that taught by Jesus, especially as described in that outline of his teachings on the subject, known as the Sermon on the Mount. The concepts set forth in that document, however, had to be stated in modern psychological terms in order to deal with them scientifically. This was a task to which fourteen years of study were devoted, the results of which are stated in *The Psychology of Christian Personality.*[1] This is further amplified in Part II of this book.

For our purposes, Jesus' concept of character was formulated under eight general traits. These became the foundation of our program. These eight general traits, however, are not to be thought of as being eight trait entities. They are, rather, general principles, each covering a number of different traits. It was important, therefore, to seek a more precise unit of behavior to use, which could be more directly and specifically dealt with in our curricular materials. The unit used is generally recognized by psychologists as the most important concept in social psychology; namely, the attitude. It is not easy to define simply. A semi-technical definition is, that an attitude is a positive or negative bias to react in a particular situation in a particular way. Attitudes include our likes and dislikes, our biases and prejudices, our system of values—in short our real working philosophy of life. Evidence is making it increasingly clear that the attitudes we form make the difference between happiness and unhappiness, mental health and mental disease, strong and weak character, wholesome and unwholesome per-

[1] Ligon, Ernest M., THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CHRISTIAN PERSONALITY. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1935.

sonality. If they are to play a real part in personality, therefore, trait goals must consist basically of attitudes.

The next step in our research consisted in assembling the results of all the extensive scientific attitude studies from the fields of child psychology, social psychology, mental hygiene, and psychiatry. From these studies, several hundred significant attitudes were brought together and organized under the eight traits described in the study of the Sermon on the Mount. It should be pointed out that while neither the selection of the eight traits nor the organization of the attitude list, in this initial study, were approached experimentally, the task was carried out in the light of all the existing research data available in the field. It was at this point that our own experimental studies began.

This list of attitudes was much too long. Therefore, questionnaire studies were made with the coöperation of the parents of the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Albany, New York, and later of the First Reformed Church of Schenectady, New York. On the basis of these studies, we were able to select from the list those attitudes of wholesome personality, which are most commonly lacking and in most need of development in children. The final list selected consists of approximately three hundred and fifty such attitudes. It will be subject to revision, of course, as new data indicates its necessity.

We then proceeded to try to find out at what age levels these attitudes can best be taught. Hundreds of interviews with individual children and group discussions with children of various ages were held. These, together with the data from increasingly large numbers of relevant studies from other child research laboratories, finally made it possible for us to set forth age-level goals, with some confidence in their psychological validity.

A simple type of factor analysis, a highly technical statistical procedure, was then undertaken, which resulted in the statement of some twenty-seven trait-factors, thus effecting a more precise organization of the attitudes under each of the eight traits. Factor analysis represents one of the most significant new developments in psychology. By very highly technical statistical

methods, specific attitudes can be studied to discover whether or not certain groups or clusters of them tend to go together. If they do, such clusters are believed to be genuine personality traits. This is the modern scientific method of discovering what the real traits are which are inherent in the very nature of human personality, as opposed to the arm-chair theory method of inventing trait names in terms of supposed social desirability. The twenty-seven factors set forth in this preliminary hypothesis have not as yet been fully refined by this technique. It is obvious that the task needs to be repeated with much greater statistical refinements before anything approaching final validity can be expected.

This ten-year study of attitude goals now makes it possible for us to set forth a very definite and precise purpose in every lesson assignment we undertake. This purpose is stated at the beginning of each lesson plan. Every story, every discussion, every project is aimed directly toward this goal and has no other purpose than its achievement.

Why all this effort to find definite goals? The answer is, we obtained no appreciable results until we did. The evidence seems overwhelming that content-centered curricula, however great their other values, have very little character education value unless they are oriented to definite and precise attitude goals. As Jones [2] states it, "From the viewpoint of supervisors, curriculum builders and teachers, the work in character and citizenship, far from being incidental or unplanned, should be systematic and definitely planned."

Selecting such goals, however, leads us again into the very intricate problem of trait theory. The amount written about the nature of traits during the last twenty-five years would fill a small library. In no other aspect of character research is the value of the scientific method more clearly demonstrated. Through the ages literally thousands of trait names have been devised by those who would solve the problem of character by arm-chair opinion. It is not surprising that human nature refuses

[2] Jones, Vernon, CHARACTER AND CITIZENSHIP TRAINING IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois, 1936, p. 388.

to conform to such theories. The result is that these theorists have sometimes decided that there are no traits in human nature at all. When even the wisest of men try to solve the problems of human behavior around a conference table instead of by a genuine effort to find out the will of the Creator, such chaos is inevitable. Consider, for example, the trait name, *procrastination.* It has been preached about, scolded about, and made the subject of learned essays. Yet have you ever known a person who always procrastinated under all circumstances? Some of my students are late with their assignments, but it requires no chapel talks on the subject to get them to leave on time for their vacations. They may put off studying for their examinations till the last day, but they are seldom late when meeting a train on which they expect their best girls. Is it not obvious, then, that procrastination as a generalized trait is psychologically absurd? Some things are put off, others are not. Procrastination is not a true trait, therefore. Research has shown that hundreds of other trait names, of which the most outstanding example is *honesty* likewise are not psychological entities. As long as those charged with the responsibility of character education choose their goals on the basis of social desirability determined by opinion, the evidence indicates that we can expect little from their efforts.

Now, let us take a quick look at two points of view in this problem of trait theory. When the accumulated evidence showed that scores of time-honored trait names such as honesty, self-control, bad temper, shyness, loyalty and many others are not entities in human personality, some scholars came to the conclusion that there are no generalized traits. They suggested that what we learn are simply specific behavior habits. Thus, if there are a hundred different common situations in which honesty may or may not be practiced, it will be necessary to train the growing child to be honest in each of the hundred if you expect him to be honest regularly. There is no guarantee that when he has learned one or even fifty of them, he will therefore be honest when any of the other fifty are faced. This theory, carried to the extreme, would suggest that there never is any true char-

acter trait, only specific habits; that each new situation must be learned anew.

On the other hand, however, there are many more psychologists who believe that this apparent lack of consistency in a character trait is due to the choice of traits and not to a basic lack of consistency. Furthermore, some traits have been discovered which are highly consistent. Among the most interesting of these are those which have to do with race and class prejudices.

What all this means in character education is that we must stop choosing trait names by arm-chair theory and begin doing so by experiment and research. Item analysis and factor studies are highly technical scientific methods, which will eventually help us to discover where human personality is consistent, not where our theorists decide they would like it to be so.

It may be well, at this point, to discuss briefly two widely accepted theories in character education which our evidence has led us to abandon, because we can find no indication of their effectiveness, except in rare instances. Certainly they do not do the job sufficiently well to meet our present emergency.

One of these theories, still held by many of our educators today, is that character is best achieved by indirection. These educators assert that parents and teachers are constantly forming attitudes in children, no matter whether they are teaching arithmetic or morals. They maintain that all good teaching is character education by example and implication. They question the idea of a child consciously seeking to acquire a character trait. Logically this theory appears sound. The difficulty is in determining what attitudes the child is forming. We have abandoned it simply because we have not been able to discover any appreciable evidence of its validity. It certainly would not seem to be sufficient, or the world would have been saved long since. For in general, this method has been the one commonly practiced during all of human history.

However, the power of personal influence cannot be denied or underestimated. There is hardly one of us who does not bear witness to the inspiring stimulation of some great teacher, parent,

friend, or neighbor, who has been directly responsible for much or all that we have done of merit. The fact remains that this has not proved to be enough. In our American public school system are thousands of great teachers. Due to our universal education law, almost all of our children come under their influence. But our criminals, unscrupulous business men, crooked politicians, and the other parasites of society come through their classes quite as regularly as those who become the builders and preservers of our nation. If this method were effective enough, crime and greed would not characterize so large a portion of our national life as they obviously do.

Closely related to this method of indirection is the so-called situational approach. Early research projects in the field of character education showed that many of the traditional character traits are not psychologically valid. Furthermore, many of them, if sought directly by children, lead more often to prudery and priggishness than to character. They tend to make people like the Pharisee in the Temple who thanked the Lord that he was "not as other men," with other men probably equally thankful for the same reason. This caused many leaders in the field of character education to decide that trait theory should be abandoned, especially in using traits as the conscious goals of those being educated. This resulted in the situational theory. It consists essentially in placing the growing child in a succession of real life situations and helping him to reach a satisfactory adjustment to each of them. It is assumed that this will result in the kind of character we seek. Little evidence has been found to warrant this hope.

If, for example, this situational approach were valid, all students who take courses in science would acquire an understanding of the scientific method in the process of using it. Every science teacher will bear witness that they do not, unless the principles of the scientific method, as such, are pointed out. The average student can take a succession of courses in science, follow his laboratory manuals faithfully, and hardly suspect that the experiments he does, follow the patterns of the scientific method. Much less is he a master of scientific theory. Again

quoting from Jones,[3] "Much is heard from such sources about the merits of incidental training in character, the assumption apparently being that it is relatively easy to make improvement in the character of children. We fear that any hope that incidental instruction will accomplish much is likely to end in disappointment."

The difficulty in these two approaches has to do with what the psychologist calls transfer of training. One can be said to have acquired a trait only when he practices it in all situations to which it is applicable. For example, enthusiasts for interscholastic athletics often maintain that sportsmanship taught on the football field will carry over into life. There is little or no evidence that this is the case. How often does it occur to the ex-athlete to apply the lessons learned in football to his business activities or to his automobile driving?

In so far as we can discover, in order to learn a generalized concept, whether it is a classification in biology or a trait of character, the following steps must be taken. The learner must first know that he is to look for a common element. One might watch a thousand individuals with blue eyes pass by without suspecting that there was a common element, unless that fact had been pointed out. Secondly, the task is far easier, especially in the case of abstract concepts, if the common element is named to begin with. Thus, if one is to learn to be a good loser, he had better know that this is his aim at the very beginning. If it is kept a secret from him, he is not likely to discover what it is, much less learn this social skill. In the next place, especially in the matter of character traits, he must be challenged to want to learn. No one can force him to become a good loser. Finally, the concept will need to be applied in as many different kinds of situations as possible. Otherwise one may be a good loser in baseball but not in bridge, and certainly not in school work or business. There may be values in the situational approach, but they have not been evident in our studies.

Here, then, is our second basic minimum essential for effective character education. We must have definite and precise

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 382.

goals. All our curricular methods must be directly oriented toward them. They must be selected on the basis of scientific research, not opinion. The task will be far easier if our youth know what these goals are and strive to achieve them, than if only their teachers know them. The development of our present attitude trait list is by far the most significant achievement of the Union College Character Research Project up to the present time.

Chapter IV *Minimum Essentials*

WHEN CAN WE TEACH WHAT?

The third basic essential which our evidence indicates is necessary for effective character education has to do with the mental development of the child. One of the most costly errors of character education in the past has been that even when we know what to teach, we did not know when to teach it. Developmental psychology is relatively new. It is not surprising, therefore, that we find a single primary unit in one fairly recent religious education series attempting to teach a set of twelve traits in thirteen weeks, not one of which can possibly be understood by the primary age child. Also at least seven of the twelve have no psychological validity. Furthermore, twelve general traits is far too many for a single quarter. At present in our project, we are trying to teach eight in sixteen years.

The evidence seems to prove conclusively that *it is impossible to teach a concept before the maturity of the child makes it possible for him to understand it.* Thus, "Now I lay me down to sleep," may sound impressive to parents listening to the nightly prayers of their children. Actually, it includes concepts which the young child cannot possibly understand and ought not to be taught if he could. It is a far more appropriate prayer for the child's grandparents. The song "Jesus loves me, this I know; for the Bible tells me so," is usually taught before the child knows what a Bible is, much less before it can tell him anything. Jesus is a vague personality in his mind and the meaning of the word "love" is confined to a few acts of service he has learned to perform, usually for his mother. The meaning implied in the song is difficult even for adults to understand in any rational sense. A large proportion of our work in the Character Research Project was devoted to finding out at what

age levels various ideas could be understood. Even with the help of the large amount of indispensable data from the great child research institutes, it took us almost ten years to place the various attitudes, even tentatively, at the correct age levels. It is highly probable that still more refinements in this regard will be made necessary by further research.

Not only can we not teach concepts before they can be understood; but the evidence indicates that there is an optimal time for teaching most of them, after which time they can never again be taught as easily nor learned as enthusiastically. When new abilities reach maturation in the growing child, that is the time when he gets the greatest pleasure from doing them. Adventurous religion can be taught at no time so effectively as at the junior high school age. The significance of coöperation, not as an abstract term but as a chosen form of behavior, comes as a great lesson to the kindergartener. At the third and fourth grade level when a recognition of individual differences in native endowment first matures, a faith that God has a particular job for each of us to do seems to be most effectively learned. On the other hand, a deep sense of inferiority may develop at this age level for the same reason.

Then, finally, and perhaps most important of all, the lessons that need to be learned at the higher age levels cannot be learned easily unless the prerequisite foundations have been laid at the earlier age levels. In fact, this developmental approach eliminates many problems which would arise from the "Topsy" approach. We have found, for example, that some of the typical problems of the kindergarten child seldom arise among those children in whom these prerequisite foundations have been laid during the nursery period. It seems probable that eventually we will have eliminated most of the characteristic "everyday problems" of children. Then character education will consist in the formation of positive attitudes, not in a continual effort to find a solution to "problem children."

It was Horace Bushnell who said so forcefully that effective Christian nurture should result in children growing up never knowing themselves to be anything but Christians. In his day

the popular concept among theologians was that character education took place in a single experience of adolescent conversion. The concept of conversion, great as its force and value in men's lives has been, has often been carried to lengths which the Lord surely never intended for it. There is an abundance of evidence that such experiences do not always result in the desired effects. Certainly no evangelistic campaign ever produced any such universal conversion as the whole world has had within the last few years; namely, that war must be eliminated. Bringing this about, however, is another matter. It seems highly probable that it will never be accomplished until we have brought up a generation of leaders who can practice the Sermon on the Mount as well as talk about it, and whose practical Christianity consists of something more profound than superficial lip service to the Golden Rule. This will not be achieved in the twinkling of an eye, but after years of effective character education. The laws of character development are as far-reaching and inviolable as any other of God's laws. A definite decision concerning one's way of life does not necessarily bring with it all the strength and wisdom to carry out that way of life. However sincere their decision, not all of those who are converted, religiously or otherwise, are able to see it through. To decide that one ought to control his temper or his fears does not mean that that is the end of the matter. A student in college was afraid of mice. When told that it was foolish, he retorted that he knew that, but was still afraid of mice. His problem was not what to do, but how to do it.

Perhaps this concept of gradual character development will be clearer with an illustration. Let us take one factor from one of the eight traits we are trying to teach and show how our approach differs from the older, emotional conversion approach. For example, consider the trait that we call persistence and dependability. No one would question its value. Business men look for it in prospective employees. Everyone would like to possess it. It is significant that the one trait, which was found to to be the single characteristic most common to all of the dis-

tinguished men in the study referred to in a previous chapter,[1] was persistence of effort. We preach about it, admonish our children concerning it, and add punishment or reward to motivate it. Despite all these things, it is perhaps the rarest of all human virtues. It is clear, therefore, that moralizing and admonition are not enough to produce it. How, then, can it be done?

In the Character Research Project, one of our eight goals for Christian character is, "having a dominating purpose in the service of mankind." We do not anticipate that this will be brought about in a single mountain-top experience at some adolescent decision service. We know that it must be developed throughout childhood. In fact, we divide it into four major contributing traits, one of which is this quality of persistence and dependability. This, in turn, is subdivided into nine attitudes which are taught at appropriate ages all the way from the nursery to the senior high school and college age level. A former colleague of mine was once deeply disturbed at the lack of this trait in his son. When asked the age of his child, he replied that he was at that time eighteen months old. I confessed that a lack of persistence in an eighteen-months-old child is not to be regarded as infallible evidence of moral deficiency, especially since ninety per cent of the people lack it at eighteen years of age and many at fifty.

Let us examine briefly the steps we take in trying to build this trait.

1. *In the nursery* (Ages 2 and 3 years) we endeavor to help the child "learn to persist in activities which have enough variety to hold his attention for an appreciable length of time." The child of this age usually does not persist for any great length of time in any activity unless it stimulates enough different kinds of reaction that he will persist in spite of his natural lack of persistence. This is the best we can do at the nursery age, but it is of the greatest importance as a foundation for the mature trait.

2. *The kindergarten child* (Ages 4 and 5 years) can "learn to

[1] Chapter 1, p. 1.

persist in activities which require fairly long but only single periods for completion." It is too much to expect him to persist in activities which extend over several days. Again, however, this is an indispensable step.

3. *At the primary age level* (Grades I and II) "the periods of persistence can be lengthened to include activities which do last over more than one day." However, these children usually are not willing to practice in order to make things better, but they can be challenged to make repeated trials to attain success. However, this must be built around the natural drive for achievement.

4. *During the secondary years* (Grades III and IV) the child can "learn to be dependable in carrying out certain responsibilities." However, there must not be too many; they must give him a sense of high achievement; and he must receive enough encouragement. He also can be challenged "to persist in activities in which he feels inferior." This is very important, because for the first time in his life he will perceive that there are certain things which he cannot do as well as some of his friends.

5. *At the junior age* (Grades V and VI) he can "learn to persist in all the activities he starts, even when he does not enjoy them." If this is also made to connote a sense of manliness, he will very often persist in them, especially if he does not enjoy them. This is a big step, for most children, and many adults consider that if one does not enjoy a thing, that is *a priori* reason for not doing it.

6. *The junior high school boy and girl* (Grades VII and VIII) can "acquire a stubborn determination to carry out their contracts." A few years ago, when I unconsciously insulted a boy of this age in England by offering to help him do a task which seemed too much for him, I was told that an English boy "would rather die than not carry out his contracts." This may be British stubbornness at its best, but it shows that persistence and dependability can be learned at this age.

7. *The ninth and tenth grader* can "learn to concentrate on one activity at a time until it is finished." This is not as simple as it sounds. Most of us switch frequently from one activity to

another, finishing few if any of them. People who are good starters but poor finishers are so numerous among men that this one attitude, thoroughly mastered, will add enormously to human power.

8. Finally, *the senior high school and college student* "learns the trick of applying the budget principle to discouragingly long tasks." That is, considering the time remaining before the task must be done, he divides the task into relatively equal daily portions and each day does the portion assigned for that day as if that were all there ever was to be done. If he obeys William James' famous dictum, "allow no single exception to occur," he gets the job done. This is certainly a part of the meaning of, "Give us this day our daily bread."

Here, then, is one of the secrets of effective character education. Arriving at the series of developmental steps, described above, required years of careful research. It was necessary to find the constituent attitudes which are a part of human nature, to discover at what age levels they can best be taught, and what curricular materials and methods are necessary to teach them. And, of course, these methods must be geared to all the varieties of individual differences which influence the trait. None of these problems were or could be solved by arm-chair theory —only by careful scientific research.

In passing, it ought to be pointed out that this general goal of purposiveness, based on Jesus' Beatitude, "Happy are the pure in heart" illustrates the positiveness of our approach to character education. In the minds of most youth, religion is characterized on the one hand by church attendance and on the other by negative ethics. When we first called one of our curricular units, built around this trait of purposiveness, the Vocational Adjustment Unit, many a religious eyebrow was raised in questioning as to what this had to do with religion. The fact is, a very large proportion of Jesus' teachings deal directly with being "doers of word and not hearers only." As a matter of fact, Jesus himself was once accused of blasphemy when he prescribed action instead of ritual. His answer was,

"Which is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Arise and walk?" (Matthew 9:5) Yet, what percentage of Christian parents, when discussing the future vocations of their children, introduce the idea of finding the will of God in their life work? When religion becomes the dynamic of such problems as vocational choice, instead of only what it is or is not wrong to do, it will be a far greater challenge to youth. More will be said about this concept of positive ethics in Part II of this book.

Psychologists will all agree on the value of purposiveness in mental health. It is the whole basis for occupational therapy. Studies of great men show that dominating purpose is the characteristic most common to them all. Also colleges are fully aware of the superiority of students who know where they are going over those who do not. It is highly probable that further data will bring about revisions of our Vocational Adjustment Unit in the future. Of the central role of purpose in strong character, however, there can be little doubt. A character education program which does not include it will certainly lack much of its potential power in human personality.

Here, then, is the third minimum essential for effective character education. *We must teach the child at each age level the attitudes which he can learn best at that age. Mature traits are not acquired suddenly in adult life. They must be learned step by step throughout all of childhood and youth. Trying to teach character traits before the child is sufficiently mature for them is utterly futile. Usually the first age at which they can be taught is the best time to teach them. Presenting them later than this makes them more difficult to learn. Teaching mature traits without having laid the prerequisite early foundations is impossible.* Only extensive and thorough scientific research can solve the many intricate and important problems about what to teach and when to teach it.

Chapter V *Minimum Essentials*

THE PERSONAL EQUATION

One of the most important of the basic minimum essentials is in applying the principle of individual differences. *One can no more solve the problems of the personal equation without knowing the factors in that equation than he can solve a mathematics problem without knowing the factors involved. A character trait has no meaning apart from the individual of whom it is characteristic.* Effective group work is usually simply a matter of enough effective individual work. As long as a church school teacher conducts a class as if all its members were alike, the teaching will bear very little fruit. Only when the lesson is adapted to each individual member of the group can it hope to succeed. This means measuring individual differences, and in turn, involves the scientific method.

The facetious definition of science, "learning more and more about less and less," actually relates to one of the greatest, if not the greatest source of power in the scientific method. Only precise knowledge of the constituent variables in any phenomenon gives us control over it. For example, it is a common experience of every psychologist to have parents ask him some such question as this: "I have caught my son stealing. What do you do with a child who steals?" If one should answer that question, without intimate knowledge of the individual child, simply by giving some glib formula, including sermonic admonitions and appropriate punishment, he would be classified by scientific psychologists, and justifiably so, as a quack and a charlatan. Into our laboratory have come hundreds of children, some of whom have had this very problem. Due to their individual natures, it was necessary to deal with them in many different ways. Each had to be approached in terms of the factors in his own personality.

The point is, there are individual differences, and we shall not do a very effective job of solving individual problems until we know what these differences are. On the personality profile, used in the Union College Laboratory, there are fifty-nine variables. And this is far from being an exhaustive list. Looking back over the so-called "miracles" we have been credited with performing, I see none of them as miracles at all. Given the same amount of accurate information about the child, almost anyone with adequate understanding of the measures could have done as much. When we have failed, the reason very often has had to do with factors we could not measure with sufficient accuracy.

For example, here is a group of several boys who steal a car to take them to a party. One of them is not very bright, is undersized, and unathletic. His motive is to win admiration from his friends because of his courage. A second boy is highly imaginative, handsome, given to braggadocio, and totally unscrupulous. His motive is, "I want, what I want, when I want it." The third is a fine boy usually, but easily led by his associates. His motive is a desire for popularity. What do you do with a child who steals? That depends on the child. Certainly no one would expect to deal with all three of these boys in the same way.

Parents and teachers often describe their children in such terms as this: "Oh, he is just an average child." We have tested thousands of children in our laboratory and have yet to find an average child. Not only has no child tested been average in all of the fifty-nine traits, none has come even close to it.

Our evidence strongly indicates that effective character education—or any other kind of education for that matter—is impossible without a careful evaluation of individual differences among the children concerned. Furthermore, the more accurate this evaluation, the more effective the results. In fact, it seems likely that the results of increased accuracy will pay far greater dividends in terms of effectiveness than its cost. Thus, if we double the thoroughness of our measurements, we may well quadruple our effectiveness. The evidence is overwhelming that if we are ever to approach the realization of man's full potential in terms of strength of character, we shall have to know him

accurately. Programs of character education which neglect this principle are largely if not almost entirely futile.

When churches coöperate with us in our project, they launch at once upon the task of evaluating the individual differences of their children. The same must hold true also for YMCA's, schools, and other character-building agencies. To be sure, they start this phase of their work on a modest scale, but make progress as rapidly as possible toward a comprehensive measurement program.

The first type of measurement which they undertake consists only in an interview with the parents, usually conducted by the church school teacher. During this interview the parents are asked to describe their child's activities and interests—physical, mental, imaginative, artistic, musical, mechanical, dramatic, and social. They indicate both his enthusiasm for and his proficiency in each of these activities. In addition, they describe the child's adjustments at home, at school and in his social contacts. The purpose of this interview is to give the teacher as accurate a picture as possible of each individual child in his class.

From this simple beginning the next step is the introduction of some quantitative testing. At first a few general tests are used which can be easily given and interpreted. This makes possible the full use of the Personality Profile [1] with its fifty-nine traits. For this purpose we have developed a suggested minimum testing program,[2] including a description of how to use a few general questionnaires and rating scales, plus a simple battery of tests which can be administered by anyone trained in the methods of giving and interpreting such tests. Such a program, however, ought to be undertaken only after careful preliminary study and with the assurance of having adequately trained personnel.

The more highly developed testing programs require a heavy investment of money and personnel. It seems probable that, in time, community testing centers will be established to which

[1] Ligon, Ernest M., THEIR FUTURE Is Now. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1939. Opposite p. 40.

[2] *Kit of Procedure,* "The Materials and Methods of the Union College Character Research Project." Laboratory of Psychology, Union College, Schenectady 8, New York.

all who have guidance problems can turn. The Union College Laboratory of Psychology now does testing for several agencies in the community as well as for the area churches participating in the Character Research Project. Within a few years such thorough mental measurements will seem as necessary to the normal guidance of the growing child as any other phase of his healthy development.

It may look as if this principle of individual differences presents a hopelessly complex and costly picture in actual practice. How can there be standardized educational curricula? Must each child be dealt with as an individual unlike any other? To a certain extent this is true. A character trait has no meaning apart from the individual of whom it is characteristic. It was G. W. Allport who first pointed out that many character traits are completely individual and not common to the group at all. What then shall we say of this apparently hopeless chaos of individual differences? Shall we proceed blindly with such phrases as "the basic intelligence of the American people," which varies from idiots, imbeciles, and morons to our most brilliant scientists, scholars, and statesmen? Every school teacher will bear witness to how impractical this high-sounding oratory is, in the practical job of educating children.

Fortunately, the possibilities are not limited to the alternatives of hopeless chaos, on the one hand, or the assumption of uniformity among people, on the other. Another scientific law enters in, which is a basic characteristic of all universal phenomena; namely, individuals differ in a regular and predictable manner. Just as variations in height, weight and intelligence occur in relative frequencies which can be described by a mathematical formula, so do variations in character traits. Some of the very aspects of human behavior, which seem to occur in an almost unlimited number of forms, after careful study do not prove to be nearly as varied as at first surmised. For example, let us ask how junior high school boys react to injustice. Traditional methods of character education would usually approach the problem as if reaction to injustice were an all-or-none trait, the same for everyone. That is obviously absurd when we consider the

principle of individual differences. The other extreme was stated by a parent who protested, "One can't answer that. It depends on who commits the injustice. If it is his parents he does one thing; if his younger brother, another; and if his best friend, still another." The possibilities seem infinite. Actually they are not. There are probably not more than twenty-five characteristic relationships of this sort. Furthermore, these can be arranged in a definite order, and are found in frequencies which closely conform to the normal probability curve. In our research we are building attitude scales on this principle, which seem likely to reveal very high levels of reliability.

Here, then, is another evidence of the value of the scientific method in character education. To treat character traits as if they were simple all-or-none entities was thoroughly disproved by the valuable work of the Character Education Inquiry.[3] But the alternative to over-simplicity is not necessarily chaos. The scientific method shows these individual differences also to be orderly and predictable.

It is not at all impossible to develop curricular units of relatively permanent validity based on individual differences. Thus, suppose we start constructing a curricular unit, for the junior high school age level, on the problem of reaction to injustice. We begin by finding materials and methods which solve the problem for a particular child in each of the relevant situations he meets. We then take a second child, then a third. This sounds as if it were a never-ending process. Actually, it will be found that almost all of the possible varieties of behavior in most of the common situations dealing with this problem are soon included. When this point is reached, we integrate the combined materials into a unified whole and have a standardized lesson. In our project, we believe that the professional services of trained curricular writers cannot be used to good advantage until after this preliminary work has been completed. This procedure is so important that it ought to be described more fully.

How are we, in the Character Research Project, actually going

[3] Hartshorne, H., May, M. A., Shuttleworth, F. K., Studies in the Organization of Character. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1930.

about the task of developing effective character education curricula? Since we want to build them on scientific evidence, we start with human nature itself as found in the child. Let me describe some of the methods employed in building our curricula. Through the years, we have tried many different methods, but this is the only one that has obtained effective results.

In developing a curricular unit, or for that matter preparing a single lesson, we start first by getting a very clear picture of the attitude to be taught, the goal to be achieved. Then we study some one member of the class which is to be taught and find out how he reacts in this area of behavior. We then start revising our tentative lesson and project materials as if this one child were the only one to be taught.

It ought to be pointed out here that in the preparation of our first tentative curricular units, it was our procedure to use whatever existing materials could be found which related to the attitudes to be taught. These were organized into more or less formal lesson plans. They were designed, however, to be only suggested beginnings, from which our scientific curricular development could proceed.

But to go back to our method of procedure, we do not consider the task completed until two things have happened. In the first place, the child must come to a rational and enthusiastic acceptance of the attitude. For example, it may be the purpose of the lesson to convince children that *parent and teacher discipline are to be regarded as coaching not as tyranny.* We find out what this child's present attitude toward such discipline is. If it is the latter, then we try to get over to him the new attitude. We use various approaches until we succeed, and then record the successful method. This may include the materials found in the suggested lesson plan, or materials which the teacher himself finds from other sources, or materials which he creates himself, guided by the interests and aptitudes of the child concerned.

In the second place, the child must apply this attitude in his daily life. It is here that the parents can help most effectively. They help him meet real life situations until he can and does apply the attitude with regularity. A record is made of this proc-

ess. Then the whole procedure is repeated with a second child and a third and a fourth, and so on. When a fairly comprehensive amount of such material has been brought together, it must be organized into a single integrated lesson. The first step, convincing the child of the value of the attitude, constitutes the instructional part of the lesson; the second step, helping him apply it in daily life, constitutes the project. Needless to say, this is a laborious process and obviously requires years for completion. However, there seem to be no short cuts to this procedure.

The Parents' Report has already been described.[4] It will be obvious how indispensable such reports are in building curricular units of this kind. Only the parents can see clearly the ways of applying attitudes in the daily lives of their children. The effectiveness of our methods grow in proportion to the number of parents who seek and find ways of teaching these attitudes to their children.

The teachers also make reports. They have very comprehensive record sheets. Beside each child's name is a space to record the significant facts about him: his aptitudes and interests, and his home, school, and social adjustments. A separate sheet is used for each different attitude to be taught. Beside this personal information about the child is a statement of his present behavior relative to the particular attitude. The remainder of the sheet is devoted to methods devised by the teacher for adapting his lesson materials to be effective for this individual child. After these adaptations are prepared for each member of the class the teacher is then ready to plan his class procedure. At the same time he also contributes invaluable material to be used in the development of the curricular aspect of our project.

In the spring of 1947, the first two-year cycle of lesson plans for the Character Research Project was completed. These initial lessons were written, for the most part, by teachers in our coöperating church schools and by our research fellows in the Laboratory. Existing materials were used as far as possible. But these lessons were admittedly inadequate and fell far short of this ideal approach. Our great need is for church school teachers,

[4] Chapter II.

school teachers, YMCA, YWCA and other youth leaders, and hundreds of parents who will carry out this procedure faithfully until we have the necessary materials for this type of curriculum. Our evidence indicates that effective curricula can be created in no other way. This is not overlooking the values of religious and other materials which are our heritage from the past. Nor does it mean we do not need the professional skills of our curricular writers. Both of these are an integral part of our plan. It does mean that we must start with the individual child. We must select and revise materials always in terms of their value in teaching him Christian attitudes. Furthermore, our effectiveness must be determined by scientific measurements. Only by continuous use of increasingly accurate attitude measurement scales can we make sure that we retain only the trees that bring forth good fruit and eliminate those that do not.

This may seem like an endless process. Will it not be true that each new class will need a new curriculum? The answer is, no. *It is quite as possible to develop standardized materials by this method as by the more commonly used arm-chair methods.* As has already been pointed out, individuals differ, but groups are astonishingly alike. Just as our attitude scale studies reveal that there are very definite limits to the variety of behavior relating to any definite attitude, so there are also limits to the variety of approaches necessary to meet these individual differences. If the churches working with us continue to take the lessons we prepare for each attitude, and extend them to meet increasingly the needs of the children concerned, their combined experiences will give us abundant materials for developing relatively standardized curricula.

On the basis of the parent and teacher reports which we received from our first cycle of lessons, we immediately began revising them, using the method described as far as our materials made it possible. Each new two-year cycle will continue to involve a complete revision of our curricular materials until we have developed effective methods and can begin the process of standardization. How rapidly we progress will be in direct proportion to the number of parents and teachers who carry out

this method with the children charged to their care. As our financial resources increase, we assign more and more full-time trained workers and research assistants to the many phases of this gigantic task.

It is clear, of course, that this approach must not be confined to the church school and the home. It must be applied also to secular education. Eventually, the schools, which probably exert an influence on our children second only to the home, will have to integrate their influence into the total problem. This will apply also to our recreational and entertainment agencies, as well as the other character building institutions. This may sound like an impossibly ambitious program, but our own experience has been that opportunities for new areas of experimentation come much faster than our resources make us able to take advantage of them.

All this means that before we can hope to make the kind of progress we need in character education the establishment of an accurate measurement program is essential. A psychologist, who has used mental measurements extensively, feels blindfolded when asked to solve a personal problem without such evidence. This ought to be true also for parents and teachers. Science progresses in proportion to the accuracy of its measurements. And this applies to individual differences in character education.

Chapter VI *Minimum Essentials*

YOU CANNOT CHANGE HUMAN NATURE

The fifth basic minimum essential for effective character education carries its own conviction when stated, but is probably the least observed as far as traditional methods are concerned. It is that *our curricular materials must be so organized as to constitute a psychologically valid approach to the attitude being taught.* This may sound like common sense, but common practice has been to organize the lesson materials into a systematic presentation of the content. This is seldom geared to the psychological nature of the children being taught. This is as ineffective as selecting trait goals on the basis of their social desirability instead of their psychological validity in personality. Educationally, it is probably just as unsound to present content material, however logically outlined, which is not psychologically systematic, as it is to try to teach traits which do not have meaning in human nature. The organization of curricular materials, like all other phases of character education, must be determined by experiment, not by arm-chair logic.

Some religious educators, in looking over our curricula, have commented on the lack of a systematic presentation of religious materials. Actually, our use of Biblical and other religious materials is almost as extensive as in the commonly used standardized curricula. But our presentation is not systematic in the serial sense. That is, there is not a series of lessons, for example, on the life of Christ, nor one on Hebrew history, nor one on the missionary journeys of Paul. These topics have been used in religious education throughout all Christian history, and probably always will be. They have certainly exerted strong influences on our social institutions, and have genuine value in the educational

program of the Christian Church. But the emphasis has been primarily on content; character training has been secondary. Usually each lesson has been accompanied by such ethical and moral implications as seemed indicated by the content. This systematic study of our religious heritage has seemed to many to be indispensable in value. However, research has convinced us that we cannot do effective character education using this approach. Psychological consistency and systematic content consistency are seldom the same. The value of such courses is recognized by everyone, but they do not constitute character education.

If one is to teach a character trait, he must make that the organizing guide for his curricular materials. For example, in one verse, Philippians 4:8, six character traits are suggested, each of which would require a great many lessons at various age levels to teach thoroughly. From the point of view of character education, a single lesson on the whole fourth chapter of Philippians, of which this verse is only a part, would be absurd. The Sermon on the Mount contains enough material to require a lifetime to master it completely. In two thousand years, Christian people have hardly scratched the surface in understanding it. Therefore, a single lesson on the Beatitudes would be meaningless as character education.

Psychological consistency is achieved primarily by what is called in educational psychology, the law of multiple response. Applied to teaching a character trait, it means finding as many illustrations and as many varieties of approach to the trait as possible. This might well take us to many scattered parts of the Bible not logically or historically connected at all. The concept of vicarious sacrifice, for example, can hardly be taught except by this method. It should be emphasized again, however, that this implies no lack of recognition of the value of systematic content courses on the Bible as a part of the educational program of a church. The point is that we must not assume that they constitute effective forms of character education. Character education must be built on psychological consistency. Those who may doubt this need only apply the scientific method by measuring

the effectiveness of such courses in character development and they will be convinced.

Let us recall again the five steps in learning, all of which must be taken in effective character education: exposure to the teaching, repetition of or complete familiarization with the materials themselves, understanding of the full meaning of the principles involved, enthusiastic acceptance of them, and the inclination and ability to apply them in all relevant aspects of daily life.

Enough has been said already to indicate that the last step, application, is the most difficult one. It is all too easy for us to apply an attitude in one or two isolated situations and never think of applying it in any others. For example, many a child, and many an adult also, thinks that reverence for God applies only in a church sanctuary and has no meaning on a football field. If attitudes are to become character traits they must be applied to enough different situations that the child comes to adopt them as generally applicable to all situations. This is the key to psychological consistency. Unless the content is organized toward this end, content consistency has no appreciable character education value. To teach Genesis in the nursery, Exodus in the kindergarten, Leviticus in the primary, finishing up with Revelations in senescence is not much more ridiculous than to expect that the spiritual laws revealed in the Bible can be integrated into character by any other form of content systematization.

Related to this principle is the type of group presentation which is necessary for effective group instruction in character education. We have called it drama-type education. In discussing the concept of individual differences it was pointed out that effective curricula must be built around the individuals in the group. Materials aimed at the group as a whole are seldom applicable to anyone in it. It was also stated that these individual emphases must be built into a unified lesson. The question is, how is this to be achieved? In other words, how is individual work to be put into group form? Or, even more important, how can group work be made individual?

A principle applies here which is characteristic of the drama.

In a drama each individual has his own particular role. Not all or any two of the roles are alike. Yet the drama is a unified whole. It is a unified whole for two reasons. First, each role has meaning only as it is related to all the others. Secondly, all of them work toward a common end. The same thing holds true in character education. Whether preparing instructional materials or project materials, the emphasis for each individual must be related to all of the others, and every one must be aiming toward a common goal. Is this not also the spirit of democracy? When individual initiative becomes separated from the common good, democracy breaks down and social strife begins. When the common good ignores the value of the individual it becomes totalitarianism and not democracy at all. But lest this degenerate into high-sounding but meaningless statements, let us use an illustration.

One of the most effective curricular projects we have been able to devise is called, the Can-Do Convention. It is a project in the Vocational Adjustment Unit at the secondary (third and fourth grade) level. One characteristic of this age level is that at this stage of his maturation the child becomes conscious of individual differences. As a result, for the first time, each one comes to realize that there are some things which some of his friends can do better than he. The result of this can be good or bad. He can pay especial attention to his inferiorities and magnify their importance out of all proportion to their true significance. On the other hand, he can become aware of what he can do, and concentrate his attention on its importance. To make this latter attitude the one accepted by the children, we try to teach them that God has an important job for everyone. Furthermore, He made each of us able to do that job. Therefore, we must find out what that job is. To give this a more dramatic emphasis for the child, we challenge him to find something he dislikes very much to do, or is afraid to do, but which measurements indicate he can do if he tries hard enough. This is the thing he must do at the Can-Do Convention. All of these individual efforts are then organized into a dramatic whole. This is an excellent example of drama-type education. The success of this particular project has been spectacular.

This has been only the briefest of statements about this basic essential, but much of the other material in this volume will substantiate and amplify it. Developing effective curricula is the problem we are working on most concentratedly now. The criterion by which we are judging our curricula is their proven effectiveness in getting the results we are seeking. Curricula built for their own sake, however interesting, inspiring, or noble are of little value for character development. Only those which set out to build character and are evaluated by scientific measurement in terms of whether they do or do not accomplish this, can hope to be effective.

Chapter VII *Minimum Essentials*

SEVEN DAYS A WEEK

Now we come to the sixth of our basic minimum essentials. It is that *effective character education is a seven-day-a-week undertaking.* There have been extensive scientific studies made which provide abundant proof of the validity of the basic essentials already described. For this one, however, actual research evidence has not yet been extensive. But it is improbable that many people will doubt its truth. It seems certain, that when we have discovered all the principles of effective character education, we shall find that it must be a seven-day-a-week task. That in itself is not so surprising, although the number of people who expect it to be achieved at the cost of only an hour a week is astonishing.

What is much less likely to be realized is that *effective character education probably requires the actively integrated coöperation of all the major influences affecting the child.* This does not mean a sort of mutual tolerance. It means that they must have an integrated program, each playing its own clearly defined part in the total process. The Scouts could be doing a perfect job, the YMCA and YWCA another, the school, the church school, the boys' clubs, and the home, each could be doing an excellent piece of work; yet the total result might be negligible in permanent effectiveness, because none of them has a chance to practice fully the five steps in the learning process, described in Chapter II.

What evidence is there for this assertion? Most scoutmasters recognize the fact that their best efforts are unavailing without home coöperation. Many a summer camp director has seen all the good work of an entire summer undone in a week. No intelligent church school teacher expects his pupils to learn the moral

principles taught there without the backing of home and school. The commonly accepted opinion that all these influences, even if operating independently, are "fine for our children" is not substantially supported by the facts.

It has long since been proved that we do not learn character traits by the simple process of being preached to on the subject. We must apply them to real life situations. But if we apply them to narrowly restricted situations, they often become tied up with those situations and are seldom used elsewhere. Many a Boy or Girl Scout considers that doing a good turn every day is confined entirely to Scouthood. The ideals of Scouting will never become a part of personality until all the influences affecting the growing boy stress them. Many if not most church goers practice an idealism and form of behavior in church which they seldom follow outside. Even more significantly, they do hundreds of things outside which they would never think of doing in church. Until religion becomes a dynamic in every corner of our lives, it can hardly be thought of as an important part of our personalities. A psychoanalytic concept, called logic-tight compartments, refers to a tendency for each of us to have several systems of ethics, one for each of the social groups in which we move.

It is not entirely impossible that this tendency is one factor in our inclination to evaluate the importance of things in indirect proportion to their distance from us. Thus, a death in our own family seems much more significant to us than ten thousand deaths in a distant land. Character traits become real characteristics of our personalities only to the extent that they become general and are applied in all situations. Achieving this result is not easy. However, it seems logical to suppose that we have a far better chance of bringing it about if home, school, church, and all the other social institutions which play a part in the child's life integrate their programs so that all of them will be emphasizing the same thing at the same time—probably different aspects of it, but none the less the same thing.

It may occur to the reader that such integration is highly improbable. But let us not be too sure of that. The apparent

isolation of our character building institutions and their seeming dogmatism as to the ultimate value of their own various programs is more superficial than real. For example, in addition to the churches now working with us from many states and denominations, the YMCA is coöperating with us in a research program, the express purpose of which is to explore the possibilities of integrating their boys' work with the Character Education Project.[1] Other groups are interested and will join in this experiment whenever the time is ripe for them to do so. Several private schools also are studying our methods with the idea of doing likewise, and the coöperation of the public schools has been keenly enthusiastic. They, too, stand ready to participate in this effort as soon as a workable program is developed for doing so. Such programs of integration are not at all impossible to achieve. They certainly are essential to success. There must be ways of bringing this about.

There are a hundred or so character building agencies and institutions, however, each of which would be very happy to bring about such coöperation if their own particular methods were adopted. Which theory of character education shall we use in this seven-day-a-week coöperative venture? Freedom to character educate children as we wish usually means that they are exposed to from four to ten different approaches, which seem to cancel out the effectiveness of one another. The task would be far more simple if it were only true that exposing children to a succession of good influences were enough. Unfortunately, that does not seem to be the case.

Let us use an analogy, even if somewhat overdrawn, to make this point clear. In the construction of an automobile from raw materials to the finished product, a great many people do a great many things to bring about the end result. However, there must be a very definite order in which these events take place. If all these people did all these things to the raw materials in a haphazard, random fashion, certainly nothing remotely resembling an automobile would be forthcoming. So it would seem to be with character education. It may be even more so. With our

[1] Schenectady YMCA.

hundreds of educational agencies all bent on producing fine men and women, the fact remains that up to now at least we have missed the mark a long ways in terms of the maximum human potential, so far as to be pitiful if not tragic.

Which theory of character education shall we use then? Perhaps it is true that at the present time there cannot be unqualified common agreement as to our procedures. But I am convinced that if we apply the refining tests of the scientific method to each of our divergent theories, we must eventually come together as inevitably as the day follows the night. If there are universal laws of character, there must be an ultimate system of character education, which is the true one in the very nature of things—God's plan, if you please. It is our task to discover it, not to invent one of our own.

Chapter VIII *Minimum Essentials*

BY THEIR FRUITS

The seventh basic minimum essential will hardly be surprising to anyone who has read this far. It is that *we must set up reliable and valid measuring devices to evaluate our methods and materials.* When any new theory is introduced into a character education program, or new materials presented, every effort must be made to evaluate them accurately. Such measurements are difficult to make, and require the aid of persons technically trained to do so. Nevertheless, if we are to make rapid progress we have no alternative. Methods have been used in practice for centuries which could have been proven futile very quickly by scientific measurement. Therefore, *when anyone sets forth new methods or new curricula, let us demand that objective evidence of their effectiveness be produced.* No doubt many statements are made in this book for which the reader will demand evidence. It is right and proper that he should. It is to be hoped that he will acquire the habit and make the same demand concerning all theoretical assumptions.

Our own procedure, then, can be described in this way. We take some aspect of the problem of character development and put it under the microscope of objective evidence. We keep focusing our microscope, by the methods of scientific evidence, until the problem is as clearly focused as the present refinement of our scientific microscope makes possible; at the same time constantly trying to improve our microscope. Then we describe what we see as accurately as we can, and follow our evidence wherever it leads us.

Our microscope is far from the precision instrument we could wish. But thanks to the work of such scientists as Hugh Hartshorne, Mark A. May, G. W. Allport, J. B. Maller, L. W. Pressey, F. K. Shuttleworth, P. M. Symonds, Vernon Jones, Goodwin Watson, E. K. Wickman, D. G. Ryans, L. L. Thurstone, R. B. Cattell, and

E. J. Chave, to mention only a few, great progress has been made toward the fashioning of instruments by which the broad outlines of our problem can be drawn. In our own project we have used these instruments as carefully as we could. To discover what attitudes are a part of human nature takes years of painstaking research. It cannot be decided around a conference table in a few months. To find out at what stages of the child's development they can be taught can be achieved only by hundreds of careful studies of children's philosophies at all age levels. They cannot be assigned in some logical order like the building of a sermon or the writing of a book. *To develop effective methods for character education means trying every promising lead, measuring carefully its effectiveness, then rejecting it, or refining it, or emphasizing it according to these findings, until we have methods that do work.*

In the Character Research Project, our parents and teachers often ask us to make our methods simpler and easier. We would gladly do that if we could. But we can no more make character education easy simply by wishing to do so than the teacher of higher mathematics or physics can make such subjects simple because the undergraduate does not like to study so hard. *Human nature is not simple. The Lord did not make it that way. We have only two choices, to discover and obey the laws of character development, complex as they are, or not to achieve the destiny of which man is undoubtedly capable.*

It would not be desirable even if it were possible for our methods to be adopted by character building agencies everywhere. *What is needed is a great national or international character research institute.* Let every character building agency in the country organize careful research programs aimed at a constant revision and development of its methods. Those in charge of the research should be members of this national character research institute. Properly financed by those who have vision for such research, an institute of this kind could make progress at an amazingly rapid rate. Scientific research seems at times painfully slow. Actually, argument and opinion have made almost no progress in a thousand years. *In such an institute, men of different opinions would not try to gain the advantage by argument, but by experiment.* Coöpera-

tive research programs of this kind could solve problems far more rapidly than we realize.

Here, then, are the possibilities as to the contribution of science to effective character education. Here is the way in which we can eventually achieve an integrated approach to character education. The possibilities of such a program as this are almost incredible. The proven methods in every field eventually win out over all others. Men who have faith in God will hardly question the importance of studying the universal spiritual and social laws, the better to know His will and gain His power for their children.

Chapter IX

PROBABILITIES

We have seen the tremendous possibilites for human personality if the scientific method is applied generally to our problems of character development. Now, what are the probabilities that they will actually be realized? Has all this been an exaggeration of the actual case, just an over-enthusiasm for some new panacea in character education? When all the available scientific data is carefully examined and reëxamined and their implications considered, the answer remains the same. *It seems no longer possible to doubt that human nature has potential far beyond our present level of social and moral achievement. The possibilities for human character are inspiring. But the probabilities of attaining it are another matter entirely.* When the President of the United States said in a radio address not long ago that all our problems could be solved quickly if everyone would apply the principle of the Sermon on the Mount, probably most of his hearers agreed. Yet neither he nor they had the slightest expectation that this would come to pass. Similarly, character education of the type which has been described may seem far too much like raising ourselves by our own boot straps for us to assume that seeing its possibilities is equivalent to or even presupposes achieving them.

This question of probabilities will be brought up again, even more extensively, in Part II of this book. The problem for this chapter is, *What are the probabilities that character-building agencies, both formal and informal, will use the scientific method in dealing with the problem of character development?* Up to now, almost all methods used have been largely the result of arm-chair theory and opinion—some good, some bad. Significant experiments of a thorough-going scientific nature in this field are very few indeed.

One should not answer this question of probability lightly. To assume that because a thing never has been done it never will be, has been proved false hundreds of times within the last century of scientific endeavor. But to assume the opposite is equally fallacious. Let us look at a few apparent characteristics of human nature, as we know it, which would seem to be the greatest obstacles to the attainment of these possibilities for character. The question is, are they insurmountable obstacles or not?

One of the most astonishing facts in human history is that the scientific method ever did arise. The human mind has so many common forms of thinking which are the very antithesis of the scientific method, that one may well doubt whether it is humanly possible to teach it even to scientists with the exception of a few brilliant minds and with regard to narrowly restricted groups of phenomena. Less than ten per cent of the people can really understand it. And those who do master it, do not apply it to more than a small proportion of their daily problems. Physicists and chemists do not appear to be any more scientific with regard to their social problems and politics than poets and musicians. In listening to faculty discussions on the meaning of a liberal education, one does not hear scientists and engineers appeal to the scientific method one whit more often than teachers of literature and foreign language.

If man, even the most highly endowed, does not use the scientific method, what kind of reasoning does he use? When we look closely, the facts are appalling. Here are a few of our more common habits of thinking. For those who believe in democracy and more especially in Christian democracy, here perhaps are man's greatest weaknesses—democracy's greatest weaknesses. If democracy fails, it will be because these habits of thinking are too deeply ingrained in the human mind to be dislodged.

The first of these is over-confidence in our own judgments. One reads much in books of child psychology on how to develop self-confidence. In regard to real achievement its value is obvious, but not so desirable with respect to the unfailing validity of our opinions. In this regard what is far more necessary is to convince most of us that we are not infallible. Beginning with the very

young child, who is certain he knows a lot more than his parents about the right foods for him and the correct bedtime, on up to the high school boys and girls who are sure that now they are grown up and certainly can take care of themselves better than their old-fashioned parents, we are all too positive we are right. Even the college undergraduate argues with the faculty on what should be taught, how it should be taught, and when it should be taught. He resents being treated like a kindergarten child yet with all the typical resentment of a kindergarten child. And so on into adulthood. We have had people pass judgment on our entire project after only an hour's orientation in the laboratory. Certainly we were not born with infallibility. And even worse, neither did we inherit a sufficient awareness of that fact. Here, then, is a grave weakness in human nature. It certainly is not the scientific attitude. Can man be taught to think objectively, to learn all the facts before passing judgment, to recognize his fallibility and seek more dependable criteria?

Then there is our strong habit of making all-or-none judgments. An idea or a movement or a political philosophy is all right or all wrong. In democracy there are no flaws. In communism there are no virtues. Many will remember our old Sunday School missionary maps. Christian countries, especially protestant ones, were solid white in color. Countries with other religions were solid black. In fact, the Baptists were pretty certain that the Methodists ought to be a very dark gray and vice versa. Republicans find it difficult to see virtue in Democrats. And race differences are thought of as if they were invariable and universal. Here again is a habit of mind which is certainly not scientific. The all-or-none hypothesis is seldom if ever justified by the facts. We most certainly will not be scientific about character education either as to method or evaluation, until we can think more quantitatively. Is this habit a part of the inherited nature of human personality, or can we be taught to react quantitatively? The probabilities for character education depend on the answer to these questions.

Akin to this habit is our tendency to judge people and ideas by their imperfections. In our Project no one has yet suggested that he would not like the eight traits to be characteristic of his child.

Yet many a person has refused to coöperate with the Project simply because of one or two minor flaws in it. Husbands and wives often see each other's flaws, tending to overlook and take for granted their virtues. One serious fault in a child causes an emotional upheaval in many a parent, so that it becomes magnified beyond all reason. Even when the alternative decision is worse, flaws may delay or completely block desirable types of behavior. Fathers may fear psychological tests in the vocational guidance of their children, "for fear tests may make a mistake." The alternative is often their own "common sense," for which the probability of error is many times greater. The scientific method requires an over-all objective evaluation of all the evidence. The tendency of most people to do this is rare indeed.

Another common characteristic, especially in such fields as character education, seems to be a desire for final, complete and infallible systems. Our own methods are often referred to as a "plan," to be judged on its present merits. Actually, one of its greatest strengths is its lack of finality. Others recognize that it is not final as yet, but expect that it will be shortly. The concept of an ongoing development which never reaches finality is not easily accepted by most of us. Yet *it would be better to adopt a character education theory worked out by a college sophomore using this experimental, ever-changing development, than the finest system ever conceived by experts which does not constantly test and revise its methods by scientific investigation.* The fact remains that most of us like completed final systems and resist change.

Still another very common and highly dangerous type of reaction is the single-incident reaction. A man may live an exemplary life and do great good. One unwise act may cause his fellows to discard all that he has done. A large percentage of all our judgments are made on the basis of a single incident.

Then, again, there is our tendency to jump to conclusions on the basis of pseudo-logical deductions instead of objective evidence. These last two faulty thinking habits combine to give us the curious and warped reasoning of the malicious gossip. The truth is so seldom arrived at that it has been said, if one hears a thing through gossip, that in itself is almost certain proof that it is not

true. This is certainly a far cry from the scientific method of thinking.

One of the gravest weaknesses of human nature is its tendency to follow leaders and not causes, interests and not values. College students are almost as likely to elect professors as courses. The amount of work they do is due far more to the personality of the professor than to the value of the course. Church attendance is certainly determined much more by the eloquence of the preacher than by the religion of the congregation. Just as students often think they work for professors instead of for an education, so church members work for ministers and not for God. Not long ago a mother withdrew her efforts in the Character Research Project because of her resentment toward something I had done. Later, of course, she realized that she was working for the character education of her children and not for me, and expressed deep chagrin at her behavior. But her case is not unusual; in fact, it is the typical behavior of most of us. Sincere leaders do not like this habit of human nature. It is appalling to them to realize how much more their cause depends upon how they present it than what they have to say. Through all history great orators have ruled the world, not because they had great wisdom but because they were great orators. How easy it is to destroy their influence and along with it their causes, if greater orators follow after them with other theories! Is this really human nature or can we bring up a generation that will follow causes rather than leaders, and persist in those causes even if the leaders fall? There is reason to believe that we can.

Here, then, are some of the most detrimental of men's habits of thinking which are likely to be the greatest obstacles to the use of the scientific method. If these types of reasoning are a part of the inherited nature of man, the probabilities of his applying objective methods to character education are negligible. Parents, teachers, ministers, official boards, even scientists outside their chosen fields use these modes of reaching decisions so generally that we may well wonder what the probabilities are for the scientific method in character education, however great the possibilities may be.

On the other hand, observe the history of science. Up to the middle of the last century only a handful of significant scientific experiments had been done. Men like Copernicus and Galileo were rare indeed. Then, almost overnight, the scientific method caught on. The transformation of our physical world since then has been one of the most remarkable phenomena of history. To be sure, we have not yet applied it to our politics, our social institutions or our character education. Does it follow then that we never will? One recent general survey of religious education shows not the slightest evidence of the scientific method and uses the word "research" when referring only to opinion, never to experiment. But this was true of all learning a hundred years ago. It is entirely probable that, motivated partly by the urgency of the atomic age and partly by a vision of the possibilities of the scientific method in character education, man will at last turn away from his solemn assemblies as the final sources of wisdom and begin in earnest to distinguish between the true and false prophets by their fruits. If this happens, and our progress is proportionate to that of the natural sciences, we may well make the atom bomb obsolete before it makes us obsolete.

Here, then, are the possibilities and probabilities of the contribution of science to the most critical problem of our present day, character education. Let us hope that man can rise above the worst that is in him and achieve the divine that is in him and bring forth a greater generation which will find more sensible ways of trying to solve its problems than through strife, prejudice, anger, and selfishness.

PART II

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE PROBLEM OF CHARACTER

Chapter X

THE ROLE OF RELIGION

The first half of this book was written from the point of view of presenting the role of science as an indispensable factor in effective character education. In the second half, from the scientist's point of view, the role of religion is set forth as likewise indispensable. It matters not whether one role is more important than the other. There seems to be abundant evidence that we shall not do the job if either one is omitted. *Religionists and scientists do not always speak the same language. They had better learn if our modern civilization is to survive.* Furthermore, it is my observation that there are far more religionists who are unscientific than there are scientists who are irreligious.

If the outlook for the general use of the scientific attitude does not seem promising, that is nothing compared to the basic level of religion among men. Just as advertisers are able to convince millions of people that a product is scientific merely by giving its Latin name, so do men think of themselves as being religious because of a very superficial affinity to the Church. The hearers of the word nowadays are far too few, but the doers are fewer. A considerable proportion of our church people sincerely believe that "just practicing the Golden Rule" is the main business of religion, and that they are quite competent to distinguish between right and wrong, guided only by their consciences. Religion is indeed the greatest force for good among men. The fact remains that it is not even a fraction of the force it potentially could be.

Let us consider, then, the possibilities and probabilities of religion as a factor in character education. The writer finds himself at one moment inspired by the possibilities and the next in despair at the probabilities. One thing seems overwhelmingly indicated by the evidence. Unless we can do an enormously better

job of character education than we are doing, the outlook for mankind is very dark. Nevertheless, the possibilities are great. This section of the book will be essentially an attempt to show what great achievements in character are possible. Man's so-called incurable religion must cease to have the aspects of an incurable disease and become the wholesome power in human personality which the founder of the Christian religion expected it to be.

One educator has asked, "Why place the center of character education in religion and particularly in the church school instead of in the secular schools? The Church is much too bound down by tradition and a lack of financial vision for its educational program. The school will really do the job." The schools must play an indispensable role in character education. As for the quality of vision which the Church may gain for character education, perhaps he is wrong. After all, it has not been very long since our vision for secular education was not very inspiring either. Moreover, there is at least one great force in the Church that will probably see to it that that institution does carry out its character building responsibilities. That force consists of the parents of our children.

However, even if the Church as an institution should refuse to meet this challenge, the central role in character is still religion. Human nature can never achieve its highest potential without religion. If the Church does not do its share in the task, the job will never be done. Let us see why this is so.

In a study reported at the American Psychological Association, in 1941,[1] I described a hundred "cases" from our files in which very definite changes in personality had taken place. The question was, what had brought about these changes? The influences brought to bear upon these children were of three types. In the first place, we had made significant changes in their environments. Changing grades, teachers or subjects in school; or allowances, possessions or privileges at home are typical examples. The second kind of influence had to do with training in many kinds of skills. The third

[1] Ligon, Ernest M., Lecture before American Psychological Association, September 1941. "A Study of the Influence of Philosophical Attitudes on Personality Adjustment."

influence was an effort to change their attitudes toward the various aspects of their lives. Their evaluation of work and play, success and failure, their homes and schools, friends and enemies, are examples of these evaluative attitudes. In many instances, then, we had changed the external environment of the child. The personality changes, however, were found to be almost unrelated to this fact. This would seem to suggest that while a high standard of living may be a desirable goal for a people, any nation which believes that this, in and of itself, will solve all its social and personal problems is doomed to disaster. Unhappiness is not confined to any one socio-economic level. The rich are probably as unhappy as the poor. Likewise we taught many of these children skills—whichever ones they needed to learn. These included social skills, emotional skills, study skills and even academic skills. Doing so failed to bring out definite personality changes quite as often as it seemed to succeed. Thus, the concept that education in skills will solve our problems seems equally likely to fail. An educated nation may be strong but it is not necessarily happy and good. Finally, what about attitudes? *We found that in every case when we changed personality we had changed an evaluative attitude.* And as we shall see, this basically is religion. Psychologically, a man's religion consists of his evaluative attitudes. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Our experimental results certainly verify the force of this ancient proverb.

Let us look further at this evaluative attitude concept. An evaluative attitude is a way in which one evaluates some aspect of his life. One man lives to eat, another eats to live. One thinks the ideal in life is high income—another that it is serving his fellow man. One is suspicious and bitter toward his fellows, another has faith in them which persists in spite of their shortcomings. A fuller description of this has been given elsewhere.[2] It should be sufficient here to say that the way life looks to us is clearly far more a function of ourselves than of life. The difference between the coward and the hero is all in how each looks at danger. Hatred and anger differ from magnanimity and charity only in man's evaluation of his fellows. Death itself looms up as a tragedy or an adventure de-

[2] *Ibid.*, above.

pending on one's belief about the future. Mental disease and mental health can be described in terms of these evaluative attitudes. Strong and weak character, wholesome and morbid personality are likewise a matter of such attitudes. And a man's religion basically consists of his evaluative attitudes.

Three important facts follow if what has been said about these evaluative attitudes is true:

1. *If it is true that changes in personality take place only when evaluative attitudes are changed, then the only effective character education must consist in attitude formation.* Certainly the old power of conversion was due entirely to the changing of such attitudes. The wholesomeness and permanency of such conversion consisted both in the nature of the attitudes formed and in their relationship to other attitudes. Character education is fundamentally a kind of continual succession of conversions, designed to build strength of character rather than to instill morbid fears. In any case, it seems highly probable that any effective progress in character education must consist in attitude formation.

2. *If it is true that man's evaluative attitudes including those which he holds about life and death, work and play, his fellows both friends and enemies, and about God constitute his religion, it follows that character education must of necessity be an integral part of religion, and religion its dynamic.* The full significance of this statement will be seen more closely when the Christian hypothesis is described later.

3. *There are laws governing this process of attitude formation. It follows, therefore, that effective character education must obey those laws.* Specific attitudes are difficult to teach. It often happens that the methods by which we go about teaching the lessons produce evaluative attitudes in our pupils toward both teacher and lesson quite different from the one we are trying to teach. Many a youth thinks he dislikes mathematics just because of attitudes he has formed about it and not because of his lack of natural ability for it. Many a child comes to consider the Bible dull, platitudinous, and over-pious because of the way in which it has been presented to him. Futhermore, the matter of transfer of training and generalization of traits must be considered. It does not follow that

because a child meets one child of another race, creed, or color under favorable circumstances, that he will show no further social prejudice. It takes many such experiences plus effective attitude guidance to bring this about. If, then, we are to do effective character education we must learn and obey the laws of attitude formation. And to whatever extent religious education is to influence character it has no choice but to do likewise.

Chapter XI

THE NATURE OF THE CHRISTIAN DESIGN OF CHARACTER

If character education consists in the formation of evaluative attitudes, what evaluative attitudes or traits shall we use? Thousands of trait names have been invented during the ages. Is there any reason to suppose that those suggested by Jesus are any better than any other list which might be offered? If one starts with the assumption that the Christian philosophy of life is the best one, has he not already violated the scientific method? As has been pointed out, Jesus himself warned against such dogmatism. He would have been and indeed was the first to insist that his teachings be tested thoroughly in the crucible of objective evaluation. Those who have a genuine faith in him can never be unwilling to use every method to demonstrate the validity of his great principles and thus also to refine their interpretation of them.

Here is an important fact about science, often overlooked. *The scientific method does not make hypotheses, it only tests them.* Scientists may and do form hypotheses to explain their data. In only the simplest of problems, however, does the data itself constitute its own explanation, so that "the wayfaring man" can see its meaning. So it is with character. Hundreds of theories of character have been suggested. In the case of the more important ones, great thinkers have looked at mankind, considered the evidence as they saw it and formulated hypotheses to explain that evidence.

One such thinker was Jesus. He set forth an hypothesis which certainly has done more to change mankind than any other. Coming as it did from a young, unknown preacher in a poor, obscure country, preaching for only three years, being executed as a common criminal, and getting a hearing from only a few even of his

own people, his vast influence on humanity is evidence of the significance of his teachings. Furthermore, when one looks at his philosophy without bias, it has the feel of greatness.

One of the most consistent items in men's beliefs; namely, that human nature cannot be changed, expresses itself again in the widespread conviction that Jesus' teachings are over-idealistic and impractical; wonderful indeed, but far beyond man's potentialities. Let us consider, however, the possibility that Jesus' teachings do represent the will of God. If this be true, there must be some way to discover and practice that will. Just as that will gives power in the natural sciences, so it must in the field of social and spiritual phenomena.

It is the task of the scientific method to discover and obey these laws. The author was once given a term paper assignment in college. The topic assigned was, "If one should practice completely the teachings of Jesus, would he be mentally healthy or unhealthy?" The study of this topic took some fourteen years of research requiring both a theological degree and a doctorate in scientific psychology to complete. The results of the study were finally published in *The Psychology of Christian Personality.*[1]

This study set forth the thesis that the teachings of Jesus constitute an hypothesis of character, which could transform our social order. There can be no objection to other scientists using whatever hypotheses of character they choose. If we are honest and follow our findings, we must inevitably come into agreement as we discover the true laws governing human behavior. It is the designed purpose of the Union College Character Research Project to start with this Christian hypothesis, submitting its every aspect to the most searching tests and following the evidence wherever it leads. More than twenty-five years of study find me still convinced of its basic validity.

It would not be appropriate to the purpose of this volume to set forth in detail this Christian hypothesis. It does seem desirable,

[1] Ligon, Ernest M., The Psychology of Christian Personality. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1935.

however, to indicate first its basic spirit and then its outline structure.

The Christian Church has certainly not always taught Jesus' way of life. Too many times our practiced religion has consisted in solemn assemblies and negative ethics. Jesus insisted that happiness, in part at least, depends upon hungering and thirsting for righteousness. And yet I suspect that a good many, even Christians, if they are honest in their minds, may be just a little bit skeptical about that. The very word "righteousness" has come to have not a very dynamic flavor, to say the least. As we think of the youngsters we know, which ones are usually the more attractive, the very "good" ones, or those whose eyes are dancing with mischief, who are constantly rushing from one forbidden activity to another? And do we not all know adults who have broken none of the Ten Commandments who nevertheless fail to command our respect and admiration as much as some of those more dynamic individuals whose sins can often be counted by the score? Many a father who admonishes his son on Hallowe'en Eve not to get into too much mischief, later regales those who will listen, with the adventures of his own youth, bragging about them in proportion to the size of their social undesirability.

Indeed, the minister of the church in which we began our Character Research Project said, "Now just what do you propose to do with our children? If you are going to make them a lot of goody-goody boys and girls, then I for one am not interested." Most of us really do not want our youth nor even ourselves to be too "good." The fact is, then, that all too commonly our youth do not seem to do much hungering and thirsting for righteousness.

How is it possible then that hungering and thirsting for righteousness can conceivably be a real source of happiness? It can keep us out of trouble. It can make us more socially endurable. It would certainly be a blessing to our neighborhood when we are growing up. But how can it give us happiness?

The answer, of course, lies in our definition of righteousness. For the most part we have come to think of righteousness largely in terms of negative ethics, that is, in terms of things we should not do. And certainly it is not very easy for a person to hunger and

thirst for nothingness. When parents ask their children, "Have you been a good boy?" or "a good girl?" what do they mean? Do they mean, what have they done that is good? No, of course not. They mean, what have they not done that is bad. It seems highly improbable that Jesus would have described goodness as simply not doing anything wrong. To be sure it is not minus, but neither is it plus. In our Project, we urge parents not to ask their children if they have been good when what they mean is whether or not they have been bad. If they have not been bad—well, they have not been bad. But that does not mean that they have been good, because goodness is on the positive side of the ethical variable, while not having been bad counts up only to zero. One must have a genuine sympathy with the boy or girl, who, faced with this negative definition of righteousness, does not find himself hungering and thirsting for it with any great enthusiasm. Any active, energetic boy or girl wants something positive, something he can expend his energy on. We certainly cannot lay this negative emphasis at the door of Jesus' teachings, because one will look in vain to find very many "thou shalt nots" among Jesus' ethical concepts. There is evidence that there are only two important ones. These could be stated, "Thou shalt not be afraid" and "Thou shalt not be angry."

My father likes to tell of an experience which he had with me when I was of a tender age. He says that on an unusually trying afternoon during which my mother had left me in his care, he found it necessary to tell me, "Don't do this, and don't do that, and don't do the other thing," in continuous succession. He says that finally he had come to the point when corporal punishment seemed the logical next step. In desperation, I asked that age-old, grammatically incorrect, but intensely sincere question, "Dad, what can I do?" He says the question somehow struck him very forcibly. He suddenly realized that he could not think of one single thing that I wanted to do, that would use all of my energies, that at the same time he wanted me to do. He says the justice of my question was so marked that his conscience bothered him for a long time about what some of the things are that an energetic, active boy with a good imagination can do that are definitely posi-

tive and at the same time come under the heading of being righteous.

Some time ago a boy, who had just been discharged from the hospital, was brought into a juvenile court. He had been hanging on a truck and had finally fallen off and been badly injured. The judge asked him, "Didn't you realize that it was dangerous?" The boy's answer should give us pause for thought because he said, "Sure I knew it was dangerous; that's why I did it."

Unless we teach a type of righteousness which does use the energy of boys and girls, and men and women, something that challenges them and gives them a sense of adventure, they will not hunger and thirst for it. They will not say with enthusiasm, "Father, Thy will be done, through me." *And since Jesus himself was very much a realist and knew a lot about human nature, he would not have talked about hungering and thirsting for righteousness unless he had in mind a righteousness that is dynamic.*

I do not mean that negative ethics have no place at all in our system of morals. The football player finds that there are many things which he must not do if he is to be the most effective possible football player. He does not deprive himself of sweets and cigarettes because indulging in them is wrong, but rather because doing so will make him a more dynamic and powerful player. Recently a great scientist said, "Human nature is so made that to satisfy our deepest and most profound desires we must curb some of the others." To do otherwise is to sell one's birthright for a mess of pottage. But here negative ethics is for a positive purpose and not an end in itself.

Consider what we have often taught in our church schools, even in some of our more advanced curricula. One junior department booklet covering thirteen weeks suggests such lessons as "don't steal," "don't hit young children," "don't fight," "don't curse," and "love the flowers." These are meant for a group of fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade boys and girls. Is it any wonder that they do not hunger and thirst for righteousness? Here is another one which is designed for the junior high school age, perhaps the most energetic, active and adventuresome age in life: "Don't quarrel, don't steal, don't cheat, don't be lazy, don't be a coward, forgive and

forget." Picture in your mind a group of red-blooded boys and girls with all the things they think about, the types of radio superman programs to which they listen, and the movie thrillers which they see. Then consider bringing them to Sunday school and moralizing to them with these lessons in "adventurous" religion. In the first place, this does not sound like a very virile type of program for this age group. And in the second place, everyone will admit that none of these principles will come as a great surprise to these children. It is essential to teach our youth things they do not already know. Even if they disobey these negative precepts, they do know about them and will not be moved by further admonitions.

We once needed to learn these things that we are still teaching. But we have learned them. Religion has not failed. In the centuries of its influence it has contributed enormously to the moral quality of men and women. Pessimistic as we may be about human nature, let us look at the morals of today and compare them to the morals of the day when Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt. The contribution of our religion to mankind has been great. But one lesson we need to learn from science; that is, science is always looking for new worlds to conquer with minds seeking to know the truth. Our young folks in school nowadays are not taught to light a kerosene lamp, or harness a horse, or build a well sweep. They are taught vacuum tube transmission and electron theory, how to pilot an airplane, and vitamin chemistry. In our character education likewise we need to teach new ideals, which will build a type of character as far in advance of our own as our own is in advance of that of the slaves whom Moses tried to mold into a nation.

Chapter XII

THE CHRISTIAN HYPOTHESIS

WHAT qualities can we give our children which will make them a greater generation than we, their elders?

Parents should read this chapter with especial care. If your children are in church schools, YMCA's or other institutions using our methods, here are the traits they will be taught. Every method, every lesson, every project has been developed to achieve these results. There will be other phases of their religious education that you will want your children to have. That is a matter to be decided by your church in developing its complete educational program. Our task is to build Christian character. This chapter broadly defines our concept of Christian character. The decision of parents as well as of churches, schools and other character building organizations as to whether or not they wish to participate in our Project should rest primarily on one question, are you convinced that these qualities are indispensable to your children's happiness?

As has already been pointed out, it seems possible to summarize Jesus' negative ethics in the two concepts, thou shalt not be afraid and thou shalt not be angry. When these are translated into positive concepts, it is obvious that the opposite of fear is faith, and the opposite of anger is love. The logical conclusion and one clearly borne out in his teachings, is that Jesus believed that character is developed in two major qualities, faith and love. However, not everything that goes by the name of faith is what Jesus was talking about, and certainly there are many kinds of love. It is necessary, therefore, to look carefully at the teachings of Jesus to see more precisely just what he put into these two concepts. For use in a practical character education program, we must state them in terms of evaluative attitudes which can be taught.

Perhaps the best summary of Jesus' teachings about character is contained in the Beatitudes. For in them he set forth eight general principles which can be thought of as eight general character traits. Four of them are related definitely to Christian faith and four of them to Christian love. When we examine these eight traits individually they give us a general picture of what kind of faith we may call Christian faith, and the kind of love we may call Christian love. These are the traits which we endeavor to teach in the Character Research Project. They form the basis for the Christian hypothesis as we have set it up for scientific study in character education.

In a former publication [1] is a complete list of the attitudes now being used as goals in our Project. This list shows how they are, at present, organized into factors and subsumed under the eight traits. Every effort has been made to utilize all of the findings of Biblical research and of the psychology of personality in formulating this Christian hypothesis. It is highly probable, however, that *future evidence will bring about many changes in this trait theory.* On one point we are clear, however, *such changes will be made only on the basis of objective evidence, not on the basis of opinion.* Such research should lead us to relatively permanent conclusions much faster than argument, as several thousand years of learned debate have demonstrated. More generally accepted laws of natural phenomena are discovered every year in the natural sciences than thousands of years of philosophical speculation could bring about. It will not be different in the matter of the laws of character development. They will be discovered by research, not invented by opinions.

With complete humility, therefore, as to the finality of this statement of the Christian hypothesis, and the most eager determination to seek by every available means further evidence of the will of God for human character, here is a brief statement of our major objectives.

[1] Ligon, Ernest M., "An Outline of Trait-habit Attitude Goals for Character Education." *Religious Education,* Vol. XXXIX, November–December, 1944, pp. 360–389.

The first four major traits are described as the character traits of Christian faith. They constitute a positive approach to the problem of fear. Fear is easily the basic factor in mental disease. If these traits of faith can be instilled, it follows that fear will be largely eliminated.

The central integrating trait is the one already referred to in this volume: *Having a dominating purpose in the service of mankind.* It is based on the Beatitude, "Happy are the pure in heart." The forty-five specific attitudes which are included in it fall naturally into four major groups or factors: *purposiveness of action, persistence and dependability, self-confidence,* and *vocational choice.* The major theme in our efforts to teach it is that God has something important for everyone to do, and that each man must find the will of God for his life work. An examination of the contributing attitudes will show that this concept is not a mere emotionalism, of the sort which often leads more to maladjustment than to strength of character. For example, one attitude taught is that the way to discover what God wants each of us to do is to evaluate one's native endowment. The difference between this approach, then, and the more commonly used methods of choosing a vocation lies in the drive behind one's purpose; namely, the service of mankind. The more common criteria have to do with salary, ease of work, security and prestige. Christians who profess a genuine faith in God and the Christian religion can hardly question the importance of this trait nor fail to teach it to their children. Youth will surely find it more challenging than the trite negativisms common to so much of our traditional religious education.

Another trait of this group is *vision, a genuine belief that one can so live his life as to make the world a better place to live in because he has lived in it.* This trait is based on the Beatitude, "Happy are the poor in spirit." Its forty-two specific attitudes are included under four factors: *a wholesome curiosity, creative imagination, growth in inspiration,* and *vocational vision.* Few things carry so great an inspiration to a young man as to convince him that his life has value for society. Only the poor in spirit, never the self-satisfied, have this kind of vision. The difference between the man whose work is nothing more than a source of income and

the man of vision is vast indeed. Making this a reality, however, can be brought about by learning these contributing attitudes, a task to be achieved through the many years of growing up, not in a single emotional decision service.

The third trait, based on, "Happy are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness," is *love of right and truth.* Its thirty-five attitudes are divided into two factors: *a genuine desire to know the truth* and *a positive, challenging concept of right and wrong.* The love of truth which we try to teach is like that which characterizes the scientist. This is a genuine form of prayer; that is, the desire to know the will of God. The other factor, a positive concept of right and wrong, was discussed thoroughly in the preceding chapter.

The fourth trait, based on, "Happy are the meek," is *faith in a father God, the friendliness of the universe.* Its twenty-four specific attitudes are divided into two factors: *adjustment to the fear which results from a sense of personal helplessness,* and *faith in a father God.* It is all too common to have one's faith in God entirely a matter of verbal creed, exerting very little influence in one's fear-filled daily life. If belief in God is to influence character, it must give courage and an intelligent optimism. Just as the scientist maintains his belief in an orderly universe no matter how often his experiments fail, so men of genuine Christian faith in God hold that God is a father, no matter what the apparent evidences are which may seem to indicate otherwise. They believe that there are spiritual laws governing our social and personal relationships as certainly as there are natural laws. One way in which we attempt to make this trait a part of the personalities of our children is to teach them the Lord's Prayer as a blueprint for spiritual thinking for all their problems. More than four hundred lessons ranging from the kindergarten age to maturity contribute to this end.

The second four traits have to do with Christian love and are designed to develop personalities in our children characterized by magnanimity instead of anger, hatred, suspicion, and selfishness. In our original study of Jesus' teachings,[2] it was pointed out

[2] *Op. cit.,* Chapter III.

that there is considerable evidence that Jesus built his concept of love around the parental drive, rather than brotherhood, as more commonly believed. Certainly, turning the other cheek, returning good for evil and praying for those who despitefully use us are as clearly descriptive of parental love as they are obviously not characteristic of brotherly love. Again, the constituent attitudes are included under four major traits, which will be seen to be clearly descriptive of parental love. In passing, it ought to be pointed out that the parental drive is fairly strong as early as three years of age and constitutes a powerful motivation from that time on throughout life.

The first of these traits, based on, "Happy are they that mourn," is *sensitiveness to the needs of others.* Its twenty-six attitudes are subsumed under three factors: *social confidence, social skills* and *sympathy.* It is interesting to note the reactions of many parents using the curricular unit based on this trait for the first time. At first they insist that their children have no need for it, that they are already normally adjusted socially. As the unit progresses, however, they become increasingly conscious of the social strife characteristic of most of our adult generation. They come to realize that peace on earth and good will among men could actually be achieved, but only by a generation of men and women with social sensitiveness and vision far beyond our own. Then they come to realize the enormous potential of this unit.

The second of these traits, based on, "Happy are the merciful," is *being determined to see that every man gets his chance at happiness and success.* Its thirty attitudes are included under four factors: *democracy of contacts, sportsmanship, unselfish helpfulness,* and *social vision.* Consider how long our problems of race and class prejudice would have meaning in a generation of men and women who were determined to see that every man gets his full chance at happiness and success.

The third trait, based on "Happy are the peacemakers," is *being determined to resolve the conflicts within and between and among men.* Its forty-four attitudes fall into four factor groups: *becoming a part of the family team, becoming a master of one's temper, conforming to the stresses of being educated,* and *adjusting to the re-*

strictions imposed by society on its members. It will quickly be seen that herein lies the age-old problem of discipline. It is entirely possible that the most costly conflicts in society are not the wars among nations but the conflicts between parents and their children. The home must of necessity be the center of civilization and the main source of effective character education. This does not minimize international, race, class, and economic conflicts. But the solution of these conflicts depends on a generation of men and women who have in their childhood "returned unto Galilee," "been subject unto" their parents, and therefore grown "in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man." Our generation lives far below its potential, in part at least because of its almost universal sensitiveness to criticism. There is evidence that we can bring up a generation who will look upon discipline and criticism as a form of coaching, the gateway to high achievement.

The last trait, based on "Happy are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake," is *Christian courage, being determined to serve men whether they want to be served or not.* This is certainly characteristic of parental behavior. Its sixty-three attitudes constitute four factor groups: *courage, reaction to injustice, vicarious sacrifice,* and *courageous leadership.* It is, of course, the principle of the Cross. The Vicarious Sacrifice curricular unit has been by far our most inspiring and effective. Throughout all of the age levels, children have risen to it with enthusiasm. The Cross has too long been only the ritualistic symbol of Christianity. The saying of Jesus which scholars are confident is the one he is most certain to have said in the form in which it is reported is "He that saveth his life shall lose it, but he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." This law of vicarious sacrifice when applied to our personal contacts, our social institutions, and our internationl relationships may yet prove to be as powerful as the natural laws underlying gravitation, electricity, and atomic energy. If our children learn it, they may come to be the first Christian generation, and the one to make atomic power our servant not our destroyer.

Here, then, is our formulation of the Christian hypothesis. There may be many errors in it which only further research will reveal. But it should be repeated that science does not create

hypotheses; it tests and refines them. Here is an hypothesis of character set forth by one whose vast influence on the history of the world cannot be questioned. It was he who said, however, "Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, even God," and "By their fruits ye shall know" the true and false. If, therefore, we start with this hypothesis and seek with every resource at our command to know the truth, we must inevitably approach closer and closer to the laws of the universe, the will of God.

Chapter XIII *Teaching Christian Character*

TRIED AND FOUND WANTING

If the potential inherent in human nature is to be achieved, what must our educational methods be for achieving it? What procedures are necessary in the church, in the home, at school, on the playground, and in the other institutions influencing our youth? In answering this question, let us consider again the basic minimum essentials set forth in Part I. If these principles are true, what characteristics must our educational program have, if we hope to do the job? If they are true, then we have no alternative but to abide by them.

In the very beginning it needs to be reëmphasized that the test of the pudding is in the eating. Effective character education is taking place only when results are actually being obtained. A child calling a mudpie a chocolate cake does not make it one. *Religious education becomes character education only when it brings about actual changes in behavior.*

In discussing methods of character education, it is, of course, more important to describe methods which are effective than those which are not. However, in this field, as in many others, men have been accepting and applying various procedures for generations simply because they have grown up with them and never questioned them. Hundreds of cures for every manner of disease, theories of the inheritance of everything from birth marks to a desire for strong drink, political and social panaceas, and so on, are taken for granted by millions of people, with never a thought of testing their validity. One of the chief values of the scientific method is in testing and evaluating the concepts and theories handed down to us.

Through the ages, many forms of character education have been used. Some of these have genuine merit. Most of them have some

value. It can hardly be doubted, however, that none of them has yet tapped man's highest potential. Let us look at a few of the more widely accepted of them, especially those which, though they have some value, still fall far short of the mark when evaluated in the light of our maximum potential. The fact is that if the scientific method had been applied to them, they would have been replaced long ago. For the good fruit they do bear is far from the harvest we need and far from what we believe to be possible with the religion of Jesus.

Someone has said that much character education consists in a series of mottoes repeated frequently and with strong emphasis. "Don't do that" at home becomes "Thou shalt not" at church. If there is a positive emphasis it is usually one that smacks of self-righteousness. For example, an astonishingly high percentage of lessons designed for the character education of children under ten contain two words, "helpers" and "sharing." One would think that this is all there is to being good. In the later years the emphasis shifts to "practicing the Golden Rule" and "obeying the Ten Commandments." To suggest that such character education has had no value would be absurd. Its value through the ages is measured by such idealism as does exist among men and nations today. In two ways, however, it falls far short of the Christian potential. In the first place admonitions, as such, do not necessarily bring about practice. In terms of the learning process they constitute only exposure and usually repetition. There remain understanding, conviction, and application. Secondly, they usually consist of a religious idealism which is over-simplified, which certainly does not even suggest the power of vicarious sacrifice nor the more far-reaching spiritual laws set forth by the prophets of all ages. Consider for example, how much of the Christian hypothesis set forth in the preceding chapter could be taught by this admonitions theory, as it is sometimes called. Admonitions, then, have their role in our social order. But as a chief method of character education, they are certainly found wanting.

A second method of character education consists in reading, moralizing about and memorizing Bible verses. That this too has

value, two thousand years of Christian history and centuries of Jewish history before that can attest. The Bible represents the record of a nation dedicating its whole national history to learning the nature and will of God. Familiarity with its great and inspiring poetry, its challenging philosophy, its noble characters, and its profound religion is a source of wealth without which our present Biblically illiterate age is poor indeed.

It needs to be pointed out again, however, that character education involves five steps and that learning has not taken place until all five have been brought about. Reading the Bible is the first step, exposure. Memorizing it implies the second step, repetition. The danger is that this often comes to be accepted as sufficient evidence of the presence of the other three.

When the third step, understanding, is demanded, many difficulties arise. One of them is that most of the great abstract religious truths cannot be understood until the upper high school age. Those which can be comprehended earlier can be only partially understood, and need to be increased in meaning through the years. Thus, we cannot teach the young child the concept of vicarious sacrifice as such. And although the kindergarten child can learn something of the meaning of "Our Father who art in heaven," this petition with all its full implication for human society will not be fully grasped until maturity.

The fourth step, conviction, introduces still further problems, which are very far from being solved by simple rote memory. A child can recite the admonition concerning "turning the other cheek" all his life with never a suspicion that it will actually work in daily life. Indeed, a large majority of our youth would classify such behavior as weak and certainly not practical. One of the most thrilling lessons in our curriculum consists in convincing junior high young people that this principle of Jesus actually is practical and will work better than either revenge or submission. Such a lesson is not taught by memorizing verses as such.

Then when the fifth step, application, is considered, the task becomes greater yet, and still further removed from pure rote memory. If one is to master a verse like, "Happy are the pure in

heart," he will need to be taught to carry out many steps in building in his personality a dominating purpose in the service of mankind. This may mean that we shall be able to teach far fewer verses. But *the Lord's Prayer, made a part of one's active personality, would exert a thousandfold more influence in human character than merely memorizing the whole Old Testament.*

Therefore, let us teach as much of the Bible to our children as we can. But let us teach it so that it becomes a part of their lives, not merely as inspiring phrases to be repeated on solemn occasions. Let us hope that the Church will feel the challenge to make the Bible live in the lives of our children and not be satisfied to have them gain only a superficial familiarity with its passages.

Another theory which is more taken for granted than directly taught is the inherited conscience theory. Based on the assumption that man inherits a conscience which "tells him the difference between right and wrong," character education too often consists in occasionally urging our youth to do that which we insist they instinctively know to be right. There are thousands of professing Christians who know very little about the Bible or the Christian hypothesis and who come to church only at Christmas or Easter, and yet who seldom question their complete competence to decide between right and wrong behavior. Here indeed, conviction of sin must precede repentance and salvation. It is hardly to be expected that such people will ever be doers of any word except their own.

To say that the concept of an inherited conscience is totally without foundation is as erroneous as the more common assumption that it is infallible. A great deal of significant research is being done pertinent to this problem at the present time. Modern psychological studies of ego involvement are related to this field. What then, can be said with confidence about conscience?

A mature system of ethical idealism is certainly not inherited. Guided only by conscience no one would ever arrive at Jesus' basic concept of vicarious sacrifice. Only in the most crude way and with regard to the simplest social problems does conscience guide us at all accurately unless it has been thoroughly trained.

Actually the adult conscience is for the most part a result of

training. *Our conscience tells us which things are right or wrong depending on what we have been taught about those things, to the point of conviction and application.*

It is here that much of the value of memory verses and liturgy is to be found. In developing a working philosophy of life, guiding principles must be learned. Furthermore, they must be verbalized to be at all dynamic in our behavior. This does not mean that the recitation of golden texts, as such, produces such adults. One could, and most of us do, memorize the Lord's Prayer, repeat it hundreds of times during our lives and never once pray it. Suppose, however, youth comes to think of "Lead us not into temptation" as meaning that we must never let the temptations of discouragement, or distraction, or fatigue, or social pressure keep us from doing the tasks God assigns to us. Now, suppose the whole family are continually using this petition in every relevant situation where renewed determination to do one's work is called for. Then it will surely become a dynamic part of conscience.

Or again, when a youth is tempted to waste his native endowments, let him remember that, "To whom much is given, of him shall much be required." Repeated and acted upon in enough relevant situations, it becomes a part of his conscience. Should we encourage our youth to recite scripture? They will not learn it unless they do. But repetition without understanding, conviction and application is hollow indeed.

Another theory of character education to which many modern parents subscribe is what may be called, the good influences theory. They see to it that their children go to Sunday school, join the Scouts and the "Y," see the best movies, and associate with suitable companions. The assumption is that enough good influences will guarantee for the child an adequate character. Perhaps, in terms of average, this is true. In terms of maximum potential, however, it is far from effective. In the first place, there must be a definite, positive program of character education in the home. Then, as was pointed out in one of the basic minimum essentials, there must be an integrated relationship among those "good influences." There are many character building organizations in our modern communities. Each of them has its merit.

These include the Scouts, the Y's, the supervised play grounds, teen-age canteens, and many others. Their value to the community can hardly be questioned. If each of these, however, would submit its methods to scientific study and all would integrate their efforts, the results would be many times more valuable. As it is, these disconnected, unrelated "good influences," valuable as they unquestionably are, exert only a small fraction of their potential influence on our youth.

Finally, there is the Topsy or problem theory. It consists essentially in meeting problems as they arise in the growing child, but otherwise leaving him pretty much alone. It is by far the most common theory practiced nowadays in the home. As one father expressed it, "When my youngster gets into mischief I am right after him, but when he is causing no trouble, I just thank the Lord for the peace and quiet and read my paper." Such a theory seems likely to produce a generation of men and women about like our own. One needs only to read his morning paper to realize how tragic that would be. Achieving the greatest human potential will not be brought about by the negative process of simply solving children's problems as they arise. The profound concepts of the Christian hypothesis will never even be suspected, much less learned, by our children if we use such a method. If, therefore, parents and churches are satisfied with the present status of human nature in an atomic age, then this Topsy-problem theory will do the job. If they envision the need for a greater generation, they have no choice but to do a very different job, requiring a much greater investment of time, effort and skill. Again quoting from Jesus, "Verily, they have their reward." "But unless your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Chapter XIV *Teaching Christian Character*

NEW PROCEDURES

The major portion of Part I of this book was devoted to a description of what scientific evidence seems to indicate are the basic minimum essentials for effective character education. Now let us ask this question. When these essentials are applied to an actual character education program, what are its characteristics? Can such a program actually be put into practice? Can the average church or other character building institution carry it out?

In coöperation with the churches now participating in the Union College Character Research Project we have developed such a program. The YMCA, several schools, and summer camps are doing exploratory work in the same direction. We must keep in mind that *all of the seven basic, minimum essentials must be applied if our results are to be of any appreciable significance.* Other programs undoubtedly can be developed. Of this much we are certain, however; they must have these seven characteristics. Otherwise their chances of achieving our maximum human potential are negligible.

Let us describe briefly, then, the procedures followed in the church schools and other organizations who have undertaken already to help us discover the laws of character education and who have dedicated their children to this Christian hypothesis. The emphasis will be placed on the church school, because that is where most of our research has been done thus far. The ways in which this program will need to be applied in the public schools and the other character building agencies of the community can be indicated only generally. Especially the YMCA in which the Schenectady association has done the pioneer work, is doing extensive research in applying these methods to its boys' work and summer camp program.

The major portion of our research up to now has been concerned with the Church and the home. There are still many problems to be solved here, but the framework of our procedure [1] seems to be fairly well established. Let us look first at the work of our church schools.

Our church school organization during the early years of the Project, has consisted of eight departments beginning with the nursery for the two- and three-year-olds and finishing with Senior II for high school juniors and seniors. A ninth department is in the process of development for the college age level.

Each church school year is divided into three curricular units ending approximately at Christmas, Easter and Church School Day (Children's Day). Since the program develops in two-year cycles—hence the two-year age-level grouping—there are six curricular units. Each of the six units emphasizes one or sometimes two of the eight general traits. In each unit and at each age level there are specific attitudes to be taught, which have been calibrated for that age level, and which lead toward the mature trait. A child, entering the nursery and completing the college level, will have studied increasingly mature aspects of each major trait nine times.

In the beginning of each unit, the important parent-teacher interviews are held. The specific purpose of these interviews is to fill out an attitude scale, indicating to what extent and in what way each child enrolled needs to learn each of the attitudes which he is to be taught. The parents are asked to describe the typical reactions of the child in the area of behavior characteristic of each attitude and to make an estimated rating of how much the child lacks or exhibits the attitudes to be taught. A similar interview is held at the end of each unit in which a second rating is made, the most obvious purpose of which is to evaluate progress. At the beginning of each year the parent-teacher interview also includes a survey of the child's interests and abilities, of his school, home and social adjustments, and of many other aspects of his daily life. One needs only to sit in on a few of these interviews in one of our partici-

[1] Those wishing more detailed information should write to the Union College Laboratory of Psychology, Schenectady 8, New York, and ask for the *Kit of Procedure.*

pating churches to sense their vital importance in the minds of parents and teachers. They help both parents and teachers to understand clearly the aims and purposes of the unit. They provide a basis on which the curriculum can be related to each individual child. Home and church school thus coöperate more effectively. Furthermore, this information along with that secured during the progress of the unit provides valuable material for revision of our curricular methods.

Finally, these rating scales are the instruments for measuring progress. One must not underestimate the value of this. It is the very essence of obeying Jesus' command, "By their fruits ye shall know them." It is the only existing effective tool for the application of the scientific method to character education. By using it character educators can refine their methods rapidly. We can thus eliminate ineffective methods at once, not carrying them along indefinitely as has so often been done with procedures not thus accurately evaluated. Judging from the history of the scientific method, it is this process by which we can hope to make more progress in a decade than could be made without it in a century. At first our parents complained about the trouble involved in these frequent parent-teacher interviews. When they became fully aware of their significance, however, they would not give them up even if they were many times as difficult. It needs to be added that our attitude scales are being constantly revised to achieve greater reliability and validity. Science progresses in proportion to the accuracy of its measurements. Developing measuring instruments which have precision when used by the layman is not an easy task, but "whatever exists, exists in some amount and can be measured." It is simply a matter of finding better and better techniques for doing so.

The next part of the program to be described is the lesson plan. It consists of four major sections.

The first part begins with a statement of the attitude which it is the purpose of the lesson to teach. This is followed by a brief description of the psychological and educational principles which are involved in teaching this attitude to the particular age level.

This is our answer as to how to teach parents and teachers enough child psychology and educational theory to guide our children's development. The most common method which has been used for parent and teacher training has been the formation of classes or the assignment of books to read. As a practical method, this has been of minimum effectiveness. In the first place only a small percentage of parents and teachers take such courses or read such books. Even fewer master them. In the second place, what they have learned they find difficult to apply in the practical situations which arise in dealing with children. *Our method is to include with each lesson plan the psychological and educational principles necessary for teaching that particular lesson to the particular age level for which it is designed.*

The second and third parts of the lesson plan are entitled, *The Church School Lesson* and *A Church School Project.* It is the purpose of the church school instruction to carry out as far as it is possible there, three steps in the learning process: exposure, understanding and conviction. The purpose of the project is to begin the process of application. The home, of course, is expected to continue application until the attitude has been applied to every phase of each child's daily life for which it is relevant. Then and only then does character education become effective.

The fourth section of the lesson plan is, *A Guide for the Parents.* In it are directions for the parents as to what they are to do at home to teach the attitude. In the first edition of the lesson plans (1945–1947), these home assignments were very inadequate, consisting of topics for discussion, books to read, stories to tell, projects to carry out and Biblical passages to study. If one considers the minimum basic essentials for effective character education he will realize that these must have been ineffective for the most part. However, parents are asked to turn in reports each week. In these reports they record how effectively they have been able to use the lesson plan and how they have needed to modify it to fit the actual needs of their individual children. Not all parents turn in these reports. Not all parents have either the persistence or ability to search out ways of teaching attitudes to their children successfully. Many do. It is these parents who devote their

abilities and energies to this task who are giving us the practical dynamic materials on which we revise the lesson plans. Each revision becomes better than its predecessor. This, of course, means that the lessons grow out of actual experience, methods found which really work. Eventually, when the variety of individual differences has been fairly well covered by this method, professional curricular writers will put it into standardized form.

Parent classes play an indispensable role in this phase of our Project. In many of the churches, for example, the parents have a session before or after the church service each week. One way of using this period is to have the department supervisors come directly from working with the children to discuss the week's lesson with the parents of these children. Many of these discussions are recorded and used to help other groups. The interstimulation between teachers and parents and among the parents themselves results in this being a vital source of making the home task more effective. The reports of these sessions coming to the laboratory give us some of our best data for developing effective methods.

It is not the purpose of this book to describe all these procedures in detail. Its aim is rather to set forth the principles underlying them. The construction of these lesson plans is based entirely on the fact that their purpose is to teach these attitudes, the Christian philosophy of life. Materials are never an end in themselves, always a means to an end. The inclusion or deletion of materials is based on the practical question, do they teach these attitudes?

It should be mentioned that the lesson plans developed for the boys' work program of the YMCA have followed this same general outline. They have also been applied in week-day programs and in secular education with some adaptation.

Churches and other institutions using these lesson plans must agree to use them without basic modification. A scientific experiment cannot be carried out if the conditions of the experiment are modified at will. The lesson plans themselves include instructions for adapting them to the needs of the individual children being taught. Parents and teachers are urged to suggest new methods and materials for achieving our purposes. The point is, no uncon-

trolled modifications should be made which would destroy the possibility of evaluating these methods and materials by scientific means.

This does not mean that churches may not include other phases of religious education in their total educational program. They may wish to add training in Biblical literature, church history, Christian doctrine, missions, social and economic problems, and so on. Our program is concerned only with character education. It uses materials extensively from all these other sources. Its central purpose, however, is the development of Christian character.

Another important tool of our program needs to be described because it is the epitome of our whole method. It is a tool to be used by the teacher and is known as *the Adaptation Procedure.* It was referred to in Chapter V.

As has been repeatedly emphasized, not only must character education be aimed at specific attitude goals oriented to the appropriate age level, but it must also be geared to the individual child. The term, "child-centered" has been used so much in religious education that it has become a hackneyed phrase, usually with little practical meaning. It is all well and good to *urge* a church school teacher to teach each lesson to the individual children in the class; it is quite another thing for him to be able to do it. In actual practice the child-centered program often consists in trying to make the more energetic members of the class behave, so that the lesson materials can be presented. The shy, quiet child is seldom the center of anything. *Is a child-centered program which gives every lesson to the specific needs of every child in a class actually possible in practice? Our answer is the Adaptation Procedure.*

This procedure is carried out by the use of a class book known as *The Teacher's Record.*[2] On each sheet, in size about ten by fourteen inches, there is space on the front page for five names. A separate sheet is needed for each attitude. Let us suppose that a teacher has ten children in a class and that there are six attitudes to be taught during a curricular unit. This would mean that twelve sheets would be required for this particular Teacher's Record.

[2] Plate I.

TEACHER'S RECORD AND REPORT OF REPORTS TO TEACH THIS ATTITUDE

UNIT Adjustment to Authority

CHURCH First Church, Middleton, U.S.A.

DEPARTMENT Secondary **TEACHER** James and Edna Jones

ATTITUDE EMPHASIS: *3. Willingness to tell the truth even if it leads to punishment.*

EMPHASIZED IN LESSON NOS: 5 - 6 **DATES:** Oct. 19, 26, 1947

(a)	Attendance	(b) Initial Attitude Scale Description	(c) Lesson Adaptations	(d) Evidences of Success
Name 1. Ronnie Prem Age 9 Sex M Grade 4 Address 66 River Road, Middleton Phone 4-1163 Aptitudes and Interests: Likes to read. Reads very advanced material. Sports and camping. Adjustments: Oldest of three children. Treats younger sister nicely. *Fights and teases brother. Needs to learn to own up when he has been wrong, especially when taking things (food and money) which do not belong to him.*	✓ ✓	*Will lie if he thinks he can get out of punishment by doing so. If it is an accident he tells about it if done on purpose he won't tell about it.*	5 What would you do? Supposing you were at home and you found a piece of chocolate cake. You ate it. Your brother came in the house right after that and he had some chocolate on his face. Your mother thought that he ate the cake, and was going to spank him for telling a lie about it. What would you do? 6 Talk about the courage it takes to tell the truth when we have taken money or other things which do not belong to us.	5 At first Bonnie said he'd be tempted to wait until his brother got spanked before telling the truth. He got the point of this lesson. 6 Seemed to get the trait - mother reports discussion of it quite often. He admitted taking the money from the Sunday School envelopes.
Name 2. Henry Norton Age 9 Sex M Grade 4 Address 29 Main Street, Middleton Phone 3-0784 Aptitudes and Interests: Bicycling, swimming, sports, making things, electric train, *squirt guns,* and *playing imaginary games such as 'cops and robbers'.* Adjustments: *Needs to learn more self-confidence.* Also not to tease his younger sister. Two children in family.	✓ ✓	Will tell the truth only if questioned. *Avoids the subject and hopes parents will not discover wrong-doing.*	5 What would you do? Supposing you were playing cops and robbers at home with squirt guns. You and Tommy had been squirting each other every chance you got. Suddenly you dropped your gun. Before you had a chance to pick it up, the other boy squirted you good. Just as he did this his father came up the street and saw him. His father was very angry and took his son by the collar and was going to spank him. What would you do? 6 Talk about how easy it is to say nothing when we have done wrong, but how hard it is to tell the truth without being questioned.	5 Henry couldn't figure this out because he thought the boy would be taking unfair advantage of him. He got the point but he didn't want to admit it. 6 Realizes the courage it takes to tell the truth. Isn't sure he always has the courage. Parent reports improvement. They can depend on him to tell the truth more often.
Name 3. Grover Beale Age 9 Sex M Grade 4 Address 1 Smith Street, Middleton Phone 3-3695 Aptitudes and Interests: Music, dancing, shooting squirrels, *making bows and arrows.* Wants to be an astronomer, singer, music teacher. *Playing in the woods.* Adjustments: Middle child in family of three. Two sisters. Fights with and is jealous of younger sister. Reading is poorest subject but is improving. *Has to learn to control temper and to tell the truth.*	✓ ✓	*He will not always tell the truth unless he is pinned down. He expects no punishment as a reward for telling the truth. Otherwise he lies to get out of it.*	5 What would you do? Supposing that you were at home and had been playing in the woods near your home. You didn't know that you were not supposed to cut branches from the trees. You saw a good branch for a bow and arrow, so you made one. The next day you heard a neighbor talking to your mother. You heard her say that the police were looking for the boys that had cut branches from the woods. What would you do? 6 Give Grover the part of Peter in the dramatization "Peter Learns the Courage to Tell the Truth". Ask Grover why Peter prayed "Lead me not into temptation".	5 At first Grover gave a pat answer, "I'd tell the truth". Then Mr. Jones said, "Would you really?" He said, "Well I wouldn't want to but I know that I should". 6 Think he realizes more than anyone else the *courage* it takes to tell the truth. Needs to learn the use of the prayer to help him have this courage.
Name 4. Vance Fleming Age 9 Sex M Grade 4 Address 33 Park Ave., Middleton Phone 4-5681 Aptitudes and Interests: Chemistry. All kinds of sports. A very good swimmer. Adjustments: *Needs to learn self-control in a group.* Is very loud and critical of others. *Is a discipline problem in school. Needs to gain confidence in reading aloud.*	a ✓	He will tell the truth even if it leads to punishment.	5 What would you do? Supposing you were in school and you had accidentally dropped a book when the teacher was writing on the blackboard. She turned around and said, "Whoever made that noise will have to stay after school". What would you do? 6 Give Vance the part of the reader in the dramatization.	5 Absent, but mother's report is: "Vance tried to hide forbidden stink bomb but when asked immediately told truth though knew he would be punished. Admitted going to station though knew he would be punished. 6 He has this trait. Added much to discussion by telling of the courage it took to tell the truth when he had broken a window.
Name 5. Ted Browning Age 9 Sex M Grade 4 Address 88 South Street, Middleton Phone 4-8830 Aptitudes and Interests: Football, baseball, bicycling, *mechanical things.* Builds with toy bricks, electric train. *Very good at building things with tools.* Adjustments: *Has a sister two years old.* He gets along quite well with her. *Needs help on home authority* and helping out more at home. A good worker in school.	✓ ✓	Tells the truth but sometimes begins by blaming others and *crying when cornered.*	5 What would you do? Supposing you were building something with your father's hammer at home and you lost it. You just couldn't seem to find it anywhere. Your father wanted the hammer the next day and he was quite upset because he could not find it. You heard your mother tell him that perhaps your little sister had carried it off. What would you do? 6 Ask Ted if he thought that perhaps Peter felt like crying when he denied Christ.	5 Ted was doubtful whether it would be wise to say anything. We said he might tell the truth if he were out of his father's reach. 6 Fully realized the courage it took for Peter to tell the truth. Parents report child has improved in this trait. When he went to a forbidden place, came right home and told about it though knew would be punished.

(This section of sheet can be folded under for successive attitudes. Do not detach. Write in name each time.)

(Indicate suggested revision of lesson materials on the back of this sheet.)
(Italics are facts from columns (a) and (c) which were used in lesson adaptations in column (d)).

PLANNING THE LESSON

ATTITUDE EMPHASIS *3. Willingness to tell the truth even if it leads to punishment.*

Common Interests of the Class	Present Behavior Common in Class Relating to Attitude	Additional Instructional Material to Change Attitude	Additional Project Materials to Change Attitude
Baseball Swimming Bicycling Electric trains Chemistry sets Making bows and arrows Squirt guns	Grover and Ronnie need this trait the most. Henry and Ted need help on it. Vance was rated high.	5. Individual stories for each member entitled, "What Would You Do?" 6. The dramatization, "Peter Learns Courage".	5. Have them paste their "What Would You Do? stories in their albums along with their answers. Have them put pictures of themselves on this page of their albums. 6. Have them paste an envelope in their albums to keep their copy of the dramatization.

Adapted Lesson Plan(s)

Introduction to Lesson (Lesson 5)
Review (Following lesson plan as written)

1. Ask Vance, "What is a family?"
2. Ask Ronnie, "What makes a family team besides blood relation?" Try to get him to point out that each member of a family depend on one another. "How do his parents depend on him?"
3. Ask Grover, " Do you depend on your parents to tell you the truth? Do you think that they always told the truth from the time that they were born? When do you think that they learned to tell the truth?"
4. Ask Henry, "Henry, do you remember at the beginning of this unit what we called parents who were doing God's will? (Trustees of God - illustrate this if necessary on the board.) As trustees of God do you think that they should teach you to tell the truth?"

Lesson (Follow written plan with these adaptations.)

1. Ask Ted why it is important to tell the truth. Is it a "good" feeling to be able to trust your parents?
2. Ask Grover, "What kind of a feeling do you think your parents have when they can depend on you to tell the truth?"
3. Ask Ronnie, "Who else would be proud of you?"
4. God does not expect us to know all of these things when we are born. That is why He gave us good parents to teach us. Mr. Jones will tell you a story about a little girl who made a mistake about taking money and how her mother taught her to tell the truth. (James will tell the story, JUDY MAKES A MISTAKE.)
5. Ask Ronnie, "Was it hard for Judy to admit it when she took money which did not belong to her? Do you like Judy better because she told the truth?" (Mr. Jones will tell a story (imaginary) about himself taking money from Sunday School envelopes and how hard it was to tell the truth about it. (Ronnie's benefit))
6. Hand out the "What Would You Do?" stories. Ask each one to read his silently and decide what he would do. Then each one will read his story aloud and tell what he would do. The class will discuss whether he did the thing that would make God and his parents proud of him. Each will write his answer after the discussion and put it in his Album along with a picture of himself.

Introduction to Lesson (Lesson 6)
Review (Review of last week. Follow lesson plan as written with the following adaptations.)

1. Ask Ronnie to tell what last week's lesson was about. In the story JUDY MAKES A MISTAKE, did it take courage for her to tell the truth? Would it take a great deal of courage if you had been Judy and took something which did not belong to you? Would your parents be very proud of you when you showed that you had this courage?
2. Say to Vance - "Vance, last week you said that Judy did not get punished when she told the truth. Have you ever been punished or ever had to pay for something out of your own allowance after you had told the truth about it? (This question is to get Vance to tell about the time he broke the window and came right in and told the truth about it, and paid for it himself.) How did you feel after you had broken that window? Were you scared? Did it take courage to tell the truth?"
3. Ask Henry, "Would it have been easier for Vance just to say nothing about it and hope that no one would know that it was he who had broken the window?"

Lesson.

1. Today we are going to learn about one of the disciples of Jesus. His name was Peter and he was a grown up man before he learned to have the courage to tell the truth.
2. Have Mr. Jones read Mark 14: 66-72 and Acts 4: 1-20 from the Bible as the boys follow it in their Bibles.
3. Have Henry retell the first story.
4. Ask Ted to retell the second story.
5. Ask Grover, "Supposing that you were Peter and knew that if you told the truth you would be thrown in jail, would you have the courage to tell the truth? Where do you think Peter got this courage?"
6. Present the dramatization, PETER LEARNS COURAGE. (This dramatization was written for Grover to teach him to have the courage to tell the truth. Therefore he is assigned the part of Peter.) The dramatization will be rehearsed today, and given in chapel next Sunday.
7. Discussion after the dramatization.
   a. Ask Grover why Peter prayed, "Lead me not into temptation". Could we also pray as Peter did when we are tempted to lie?
   b. Ask Ted, "How do you think Peter felt when he denied Christ? The Bible tells us that he wept. I think that we all feel like crying when we don't have the courage to tell the truth. Peter finally learned a better thing to do than weep - What was it?" (Prayer - "Lead us not into temptation")

Evaluation of Success of Lesson

(Lesson 5)

This lesson seemed very successful. They seemed to get more out of the individual stories than the discussion period before the stories. Henry brought out that Judy confided in her mother which made it easier for her mother to teach her what was the right thing to do. (Evidences of success on the lesson last week which I thought was such a failure?) After the boys had read their individual stories to themselves they said, "Gee, you give us hard problems." I think they all realize the importance of truth, but also know that it takes great courage to tell the truth if they are to be punished. Vance said very disgustedly after the story, JUDY MAKES A MISTAKE, "Gosh, her mother didn't even lick her after she had stolen that money. I'd have been trounced if I had done the same thing." We talked about that, and Grover pointed out that Judy was only a first grader. "Aw, she was just a baby! That's why she didn't get licked."

In reviewing the lessons I used a diagram which showed that God appointed their parents as trustees to teach them; and that one of the things that God wanted their parents to teach them was to tell the truth. Ted said, "God is like the heart, parents are the veins and we, children, are the little blood vessels."

The evidences of success of the individual stories are recorded on the front of the page.

(Lesson 6)

The boys referred quite often to the individual stories which they had last week. They read them in chapel and quizzed the whole department on them. Think they enjoyed trying to 'teach' this trait to the other children in the department. After we came back to our room from chapel, Ted said, "You know, Mr. Jones, I don't think we all would *really* and *truly* have the courage to tell the truth. We say we would, but I'll bet you we wouldn't really." This led right into this lesson on the courage it takes to tell the truth, so we went on from there.

The boys could not have dramatized the stories directly from the Bible. They could not even retell the stories after James read them from the Bible. I retold them in drama form before I gave them the dramatization. They listened very attentively and when I gave each boy a script and assigned the parts, they did it very well.

At the top of the front page is stated one of the attitudes to be taught. At the left side of the page are the spaces for the children's names. Underneath each child's name is a summary of his aptitudes and interests, also of his common adjustments to home, school and playground. In another space, beside his name, is a description of how he reacts in the area of behavior involved in the attitude listed at the top of the sheet. The facts to be recorded in these spaces are gained in the parent-teacher interviews held at the beginning of the unit.

With this information recorded for each member of the class, the teacher sets out to prepare the lesson presentation. The first step is, of course, to read through the printed lesson plan, carefully mastering all of its suggestions and materials. Then the teacher considers the case of the first child listed on the class role. How should this lesson be adapted, if there were no other child to teach except this one? That is, what materials would be added or what illustrations could be used? What individual projects ought to be suggested? What special methods employed? The answer to these questions should be written in the space provided for the purpose beside the child's name. This is repeated for the second and third children and so on until it has been achieved for every member of the class.

The next step is to organize all this individual material into a lesson plan. Spaces for this purpose are provided on the back page of each sheet. Thus, into the final lesson presentation go materials and methods designed to meet the particular needs of every individual child. This is a time-consuming but absorbing task, challenging the best in any teacher, and in turn inspiring the fullest coöperation of every parent and child in the group.

The last space on the Teacher's Record is again on the front page with the class roll. It is a place in which to record success. The teacher again considers each child in the group. Has the attitude been taught? Answering this question for each child with confidence will not always be possible. If an assistant teacher is present during the class periods to record the reactions and words of the children, it will be easier to evaluate success. Even then, teachers find it necessary to keep an open mind for new evidence,

especially from parent reports, and to reëvaluate whenever the evidence so dictates.

An interesting by-product of this adaptation procedure is the vastly increased interest most teachers find in using it. Time-consuming as it is, its very difficulties and its challenge to one's individual ability make it an inspiration to men and women who have the ability to use it and the vision for its possibilities.

Needless to say, these Teacher's Records come eventually to the Union College Laboratory. When the lessons are revised, all of the efforts of the hundreds of teachers in the Project form the backbone for improving the church school materials, just as the Parent Reports are the basis for revising the Guide for Parents.

It may be said sincerely that succeeding revisions of these lesson plans are actually being written by the parents and teachers who work unceasingly to find ways of teaching these attitudes to their children. Our program has always appealed most to those parents who are eager to give their energies and abilities to helping us create more effective methods. Early in the Project, one father asked for a suggestion as to how to achieve a certain result with his son. He was given such a suggestion. A short while later he reported that it did not work. Many a parent would have dropped it at that point. Not this one, however. His next statement was, "What do we try next?" As a matter of fact he had to ask that question many times before we found something that did work. The point is, his was the spirit of Jacob, who once said to Jehovah, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." This is the kind of parent and teacher who has been the backbone of our project so far.

Few will question that this is a child-centered approach with all the literal meaning of that term. Although this ideal has been a shibboleth for educators, both secular and religious, for many years, most of us will agree that our curricula are still largely content-centered. Our children in school still learn the three R's, our Sunday schools still teach the missionary journeys of Paul and our colleges still define "a liberal education" in terms of content. Is this an inevitable characteristic of education?

Two facts ought to be considered by our educators, both secular

and religious. One of them is that, whatever their other values, the quality of character education growing out of content-centered approaches is certainly not the level necessary for producing the kingdom of God on earth. Nor can such character education come about merely as a by-product of education. The notion that a good school teacher in the very act of teaching is doing effective character education is certainly refuted by the fact that our universal American public school system has not appreciably reduced the quantity of crime and social conflict in this country.

A second fact must be considered, however. No one in his right mind believes that we dare lose the cultural heritage of our civilization for our children by denying to them this very content. A student hoping to become an eminent scholar in any field first masters all that those who have gone before can teach him, then goes on to new discoveries. Our children will not build a greater generation on a foundation of abysmal ignorance of the great spiritual and social discoveries of the prophets of all time.

How, then, shall we have a child-centered approach, which is certainly necessary for producing a greater generation, and at the same time make certain that we preserve for our children their cultural heritage? *There is growing evidence that this type of child-centered approach is the best way even to teach content, as well as the only way to develop character. Character, then, must be the main business of education. The mastery of skills is secondary and largely a means to that end.*

In this brief survey of methods, no mention has been made of the time demand on church school teachers and how many teachers there must be. Then, too, there are Parents' Institutes, other parents' organizations, the necessity of almost perfect attendance, the tremendous burden of clerical work involved in carrying out the program, the large research fee, and the requirements in terms of trained staff to be considered. Despite all this, the number of churches working with us grows faster than we can easily assimilate them. Up to now, our methods can be used only by churches of high vision. They need not be large; they do need to have energy and persistence. As we solve our major problems, our methods will become practical for a wider and wider range

of churches. Up to now, it is indeed a courageous company. Yet no church which has once joined our group has ever withdrawn from it.

What of the schools? The influence of the school on the life of the child is second only to the home. It is not likely that we shall build character of the calibre of which we dream until the schools play their vital role in the process. What does this imply? It implies that all of the minimum basic essentials for effective character education must be applied here as well as elsewhere. To the extent that schools make the assumption that they are always doing character education just in the daily process of effective teaching, they can hope for no better results than our generation portrays. As they come to admit what many educational leaders already realize, that character education is their main business and the teaching of skills only an aid in that process, then will they play their full role in achieving human potential. Already many school men are doing some exploratory work, with a desire to participate in our project. It seems certain that when we have developed curricular materials for them, hundreds of them will respond at once.

As for the other character-building agencies in the community, enough has been said. Some curricular materials have already been developed for use in YMCA character educational programs. This has been applied in their boys' work and their summer camps. The development of such materials is a slow process and the number of associations which can participate can expand only as rapidly as the maturity of our methods and the capacities of such associations for this type of developmental research make possible. A mushroom growth cannot be permitted. We are building solidly to make sure of the validity and permanence of our methods.

There can be no question but that the movies, the radio, and the other recreational enterprises exert an enormous influence on our children. They, too, must eventually integrate their efforts into this common task. This is not simply a matter of censorship, it is a matter of positive and active coöperation. Nowadays, in a single evening one can get a liberal education over the radio on

how to commit murder, even if accompanied by the assertion that "crime does not pay." To what programs can our children listen or to what movies can they go, or what comics can they read to learn or be inspired toward the Christian hypothesis?

"One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Jesus might well have stated it, "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, if it is to be fulfilled." The desire for bargains is not confined to department-store basements. Parents and teachers and sometimes religious educators seek bargains in character education. Churches looking at the methods set forth in our own project are dismayed at their complexity. Parents ask us if we cannot make their task easier. No one trained in the scientific method can doubt the answer. The laws of God are inexorable. We must obey all of them. Character is not something of which we can buy a little. There are basic minimum essentials for effective character education. All of them must be fulfilled or the results will be negligible. Obeying half of them is little better than obeying none of them. Not one jot or tittle can be omitted from the law if it is to be fulfilled.

This description of our procedures will probably be inaccurate before the ink is dry on these pages. We are continuously validating our methods and materials; always trying new methods as well as refining, revising, and even discarding old ones. We have hardly begun the job. The progress we have been able to make thus far is inspiring indeed. Yet as we look at the problems still to be solved, we realize that the greatest achievements are in the future. In a single year our methods change greatly. It is little wonder that churches, schools, YMCA's and other youth groups who are challenged by discovery, find working in such a project a thrilling experience. It is to be hoped that all those charged with the responsibility of developing programs of character education will use the scientific method for testing and revising their procedures. As we stand at the dawn of a new day in character education, surely this is no time for letting any methods become static. New discoveries by the score are waiting for all who will seek them. Only by doing so can we produce a greater generation.

Chapter XV *Teaching Christian Character*

WROUGHT BY PRAYER

"Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven."

Here are two worship services in two youth groups. The first is a candlelight service held in the church sanctuary. The young people cease their youthful babbling as they enter the door and proceed quietly to their seats. The leaders announce appropriate hymns, read well-chosen scriptures, recite effective poetry, perhaps give a sermonette. After the benediction, they move out of the sanctuary and renew the natural tenor of their daily lives. For some of them, this may have been a moving experience. For most of them it is usually an unnatural interlude in their normal lives, attached neither to what has gone before nor what comes after. That such training in worship has some value will rarely be questioned. How much value, it is difficult to determine. One thing is certain, however, the value is only a small portion of the potential power of worship.

Let us attend a worship service in another youth group. The service is built into the pattern of the Lord's Prayer. It is the climax of a month of intensive effort to learn the will of God concerning an important social problem in the lives of the members of this group. For four weeks they have spent hours in church school, at home, and in their normal social contacts discussing this problem. Their discussions, however, have not been based on their personal desires and opinions. They have been asking the question, "What would Jesus have thought about this problem?" To answer it they have applied each of the petitions of the Lord's Prayer to it. The discussions have sometimes been heated, but they have held rigidly to the blueprint of the Lord's Prayer for

reaching their decisions. Now they think they know the answer. All of their thinking and study is being set forth in this worship service. When the leaders speak, they voice the feelings of the entire group. The climax of the service is a period of dedication, when each member of the group pledges himself to carry out his share of doing the will of God in this significant social problem. It means sacrifice for some of them, social courage for all of them. Is worship of this type a significant factor in character education?

A prominent aspect of all religion is ritual and worship. Does worship play a significant role in character education? The very word "worship" connotes attitudes. If worship is genuine, therefore, it must be a part of character and a factor in its development.

It is a central concept of the Character Research Project that prayer can be one of the major sources of power in strong character. To do so, however, it must be an expression of a religion which affects every phase of our daily lives. Many people define religion far too narrowly and consider ritual and worship as synonymous terms. Indeed, it has been a common experience in the Character Research Project to be accused of not being religious enough, or rather of including non-religious aspects of character education in our church school program. It needs to be reëmphasized, therefore, that we are assuming that religion should apply to all of life. It cannot be confined to one day of the week, to one hour of the day, to one place, and to King James English.

A great many people subconsciously believe that religious behavior is confined to that which comes under the heading of ritual. To be sure, ritual and liturgy do influence our lives. No man can come under the influence of our great hymns, the power of liturgy and the inspiration of good preaching and not have it exert both a restraining and stimulating influence in his life. Unfortunately, that is not nearly enough. The power of the Church is not a tenth part of what it could be. Christian men and women could exert so great a force for good in the world that indeed "the gates of hell could not prevail" against them. It is absurd to criticize the Church as weak and hypocritical. The Church has great power and a vast majority of the men and women in it are

sincere, earnest people who are indeed the salt of the earth, and without them our present chaos would be far blacker than it is. But it can hardly be doubted that we have only scratched the surface of the possibilities of religion as a force to transform men's lives. The extent to which this is true will be clearer when some pertinent facts are observed about the very core of religious experience, that which we call worship.

Millions of people every Sunday morning recite in unison with their fellows the great verses known as the Lord's Prayer. It is said to be the only prayer in the world which men of all religions can pray. It has been put to music in hymns that lift our very souls. We are better for having said it. None can question its power in the world. Many a bitter hatred has been wiped out by the simple words, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors."

That is nothing compared to what it could be. Suppose men everywhere, leaders of nations and industry and all our social institutions should, like the youth group described above, use it as a blueprint for social, political and spiritual thinking. Suppose that whatever problems they faced, they solved them by considering them in the light of each petition, one at a time. "Our Father who art in heaven." Whatever solutions we arrive at, they must be based on the faith that God is the Father of all men. All men, therefore, must be dealt with as sons of God, whether they are our friends or our enemies, rich or poor, black or white, brilliant or dull, strong or weak. "Hallowed be Thy name." Whatever solutions we reach, our behavior must be such as will bring honor to the name of God. And so on through the prayer. Clearly, our generation, by and large, repeat it, but we do not pray it. In the Character Research Project we have materials in hundreds of lessons, designed to make the Lord's Prayer a part of the basic thinking of our children. These assignments are often for both home and church school and range from the kindergarten to the senior high school levels. If we can teach our youth to solve their problems in the light of this great prayer, their power in the world will surely be increased many fold.

One of the great sources of strength in the scientific method is the objective attitude. A scientist going into his laboratory seeks

to find the truth. He brings to bear upon his problems every device at his disposal to make sure that he does find the truth. He tries to rule himself as completely as possible out of the picture, lest his own biases and prejudices blind him to the truth. Even then he considers himself, as experimenter, an error to be taken into consideration.

Many thinkers believe that if we could teach all men the scientific method, our problems would soon be solved. Certainly it would be inspiring to see capital and labor, nations and individuals, seeking not their own selfish ends but truth. Furthermore, psychiatrists believe that the objective attitude which is involved in the scientific method would be a great force in producing and strengthening mental health. Unfortunately even scientists seldom learn the scientific method to the extent that it becomes so much a part of their personalities that they use it in all phases of their lives. It seems highly improbable, therefore, that we can make men objective by teaching them the scientific method. *There is one way, however, in which all men can come to submit their wills to a greater authority outside themselves, and that is through prayer.*

Clearly not just any form of prayer will do. The recitation of ritual without meaning is not genuine prayer. Asking for things selfishly even in King James English is not Christian prayer. Exhorting God to recognize the virtue of our own cause and the evil of our opponent's is not honest prayer. The fact remains that all men can learn to say with their hearts, "Thy will be done." This is an objective attitude which all but those of the very lowest intelligence can learn. If, then, through the years of childhood, all of the guiding principles of the Lord's Prayer are taught, to give this central petition form and meaning, we shall yet come to realize that "more things" can be "wrought through prayer than this world dreams of."

All religious leaders are agreed that training in worship must be an important part of religious education. Because true worship depends largely on one's attitudes, it has deep significance for character education. Let us compare our present values in worship with the potential values inherent in it. Jesus did not deny the

value of standing on the corners of the street to worship. "Truly, they have their reward." He only emphasized the infinitely greater values to be obtained.

In thousands of churches every week men and women gather to worship. Some of them do. Through the ages, rituals and liturgies have developed. No one can question the deep influence they have exerted on man and society. The world would be poorer indeed without them. Few could possibly express heartfelt praise to God so effectively as through the moving poetry of the Psalmist. The powerful music of the great hymns give voice to one's deepest emotions, even when the words may not always command complete intellectual assent. The prayer book and all the inspiring services built on it certainly lift men's souls, when they want to be lifted. But worship itself is from the heart. These things are designed to be the expression of worship. When they come from a thoughtless mouth, they are nothing more than meaningless repetition. They are not worship. Too often in religious education our youth are given no greater definition of worship than the solemn recital of ritual. If training in worship is to play a significant role in character education, it will need to be deeper than this.

It is the belief of those of us in the Character Research Project that the Church has hardly scratched the surface in securing for children and youth all the strength and power inherent in worship. One important clue to the problem, which gives direction to our efforts is Jesus' statement, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord; but he that doeth the will of my Father." Amos with more violence asserted, "I hate, I despise your feasts and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream." When and only when worship becomes the dynamic for justice and righteousness, is it character. Let us see what leads we have toward achieving this and what the results promise to be.

A parent observing in one of our kindergartens, said, "I did feel that I was in a public school kindergarten. No mention of religion was made." The unconscious implication of this is that religion involves only one corner of life. One of the emphases of the Char-

acter Research Project is that religion applies to all of life; the public school, the playground, business, and the home as well as church. One basic attitude which begins very early in our curriculum is that the will of God includes all of the laws that govern our universe, natural as well as spiritual, social as well as ethical. Even in the primary years, we teach children that the natural laws are also the will of God. A central part of our training in worship is teaching them to seek to discover the will of God for all of their behavior. Our emphasis on the Lord's Prayer illustrates this point. Many of the attitudes which we attempt to teach are directly related to worship. Of one thing, however, we are certain; namely, that teaching, the meaningless repetition of ritual as being in and of itself worship, is not character education.

We have done much work to discover at what age levels the various concepts of worship can be taught. We are doing other studies to discover how these concepts can be taught effectively. Here, as in every other aspect of our work, we shall apply Jesus' dictum, "By their fruits ye shall know them." We test every method and use every tool for that purpose.

If our youth form the habit of regular church attendance and enter sincerely into the church services, this will have real value for them. If in addition they come to make the desire to know the will of God a constant factor in their daily thinking, then that value is increased many times. It will give them the same level of spiritual power and strength of character that the scientific method has given those who have applied it to the natural phenomena. When, therefore, a young people's group conducts a worship service, consisting of a sincere effort to solve some common problem, using the Lord's Prayer as a blueprint for their thinking, based on training in doing so, received throughout their childhood, this is an experience which holds high promise for a leadership which really can build a successful social order.

Chapter XVI *Question Marks*

HOUSES OR HOMES

AGAIN we come to the question of probabilities. Granted that the possibilities are inspiring, can we achieve them? Few deny the potential power of the teachings of Jesus in human personality and in our social institutions. Nor can it seriously be doubted that character education, capable of bringing it about, is entirely possible. But will our churches and parents pay the price for it? As one reads the morning paper, it is difficult to hold any view of human nature but a most pessimistic one.

The great question mark in character education is the home. In all of our churches parents are being warned repeatedly, *"Not only will we not promise to do anything for your child without your coöperation, we will promise not to."* The evidence is overwhelming that effective character education presupposes the coöperation of the home. The evidence is equally convincing that the home of today is not more than a fraction as strong an influence for fine character and Christian leadership as it potentially could be. It is common practice nowadays to blame all of youth's faults on parents. In fact, at the beginning of the Project, I predicted that securing parent coöperation would be our most difficult problem. Our experience has been so strikingly to the contrary, that now I believe that *parents represent the one irresistible force that will bring about a new era in character education.* The parental drive is one of the strongest in human nature. It has certainly been demonstrated that parents will make unbelievable sacrifices to get for their children the things which they really believe the children need. There is evidence to support the hypothesis that *when parents are thoroughly convinced that something is good for their children they will pay any price, make any sacrifice to secure it for them.*

It is no accident that when Jesus described Christian love, it had all the earmarks of parental love in the best sense of that term. One thing is certain, we shall never do effective character education without the home. Probably the most significant finding of the Character Education Inquiry, directed by Hartshorne and May,[1] was the high correlation between the moral concepts of children and their parents as opposed to the near zero correlation between children and their teachers. It would serve no useful purpose to overlook the shortcomings of even the best of our homes. On the contrary, we must examine their failings accurately and, in this question of probabilities, consider what chances there are for overcoming them, and thus gaining the great potential which lies in the home.

Perhaps the chief reason why so many homes fail and others achieve only tolerable success is that our youth do not prepare for parenthood. They come to assume that along with the biological capacity to have children, God also endows them with the wisdom to bring them up. They spend far more time learning to dance and play bridge than to train children. Probably most honest parents will plead guilty to this charge. But does it follow that it must always be thus? Most of our adolescent girls seem so intent on getting married, that they think of practically nothing beyond the marriage ceremony. Until that event occurs, it is looked forward to as not only the main event but wellnigh the last important event of life. They lay few plans for achieving happy marriage, much less life's most difficult task, the training of children. As for the men, what men's school has a course in fatherhood? Young men are deeply concerned with training for a vocation, tending somewhat to look upon caring for children as a responsibility to be charged almost entirely to their wives. Ways must be found of motivating our youth to see the new and infinitely finer values to be had by those who train for the building of great homes. We must and certainly will find these motivations and challenge our parents-to-be, as well as those who already are parents, to seek

[1] Carmichael, Leonard, Editor, MANUAL OF CHILD PSYCHOLOGY. John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1946. Chapter 14, "Character Development in Children—An Objective Approach," Vernon Jones. P. 726.

the thrilling possibilities for their children which the great home can create.

It is not entirely the fault of youth that they do not prepare for parenthood and homebuilding. All of the emphases in our culture relate to courtship—not beyond the altar. The word "romance" connotes courtship, not married life. Social skills have to do with winning a partner, not building a partnership. Our fiction and movies all stress the period before marriage, not after. No wonder our youth take it for granted that great families can be achieved by instinct and without training. Actually the building of a home is a difficult task requiring skills for which youth needs to receive a great deal of training. *Hollywood ought to produce a whole series of movies which begin at the altar and demonstrate the high skills necessary for successful marriages.* They could create in the minds of our youth a whole new vision for the building of homes.

Another important reason for the failure of many homes to produce great children is that their concept of child training is negative not positive. Necessity is often the mother of invention in this field as well as in others. Until their children get into some serious trouble, parents rest assured that they are "just average children" and feel no deep need of doing anything very strenuous about them. Even then, they are often opinionated and have complete confidence in the infallibility of their understanding of them. They often have an astonishing faith that the methods of their own parents are obviously good enough to carry on with their children. This philosophy of parenthood necessarily results in what may be called the problem theory of character education. It consists in letting nature take its course with the child except when problems arise, and then meeting each situation with whatever methods seem appropriate. Expert advice is sought only in cases of genuine emergency. The title of a popular book of a few years back—an excellent book—EVERYDAY PROBLEMS OF THE EVERYDAY CHILD—is symbolic of this concept of child training. What of the effectiveness of this approach in character education? Our children, brought up thus, grow up to be "pretty normal chil-

dren"; that is, one-third efficient. They become men and women like ourselves who create a social order like the one we have now, such as it is. If we are to produce a greater generation, parents will have to master and carry out a positive program of character education.

We have made important progress toward achieving this end. Our experience proves conclusively that this problem can be solved and that we shall finally give parents and youth visions of what can be done with human nature, plus the humility of spirit that will make them seek to learn and apply the difficult and intricate laws that govern human nature. In some of the churches now working with us, it is primarily the parents who have demanded that these methods be tried. We need only look at the great extremes to which parents go to give physical care to their infants, education to their children, and social advantages to their youth. Of the value of these things they are convinced. As soon as we find ways of showing them these values in character education, they demand them and pay whatever price in time, effort and money is necessary to get them for their children.

Then again, parents' critics point out, parents and children are much too busy to do the kind of job such methods as ours require of them. The demands that society makes on all of us these days are heavy indeed. The average tenth grader belongs to enough clubs, and takes enough "lessons"—to say nothing of his regular school work—to allow for no free minutes in the week for character education. This is no less true of his parents. Unfortunately, there are no short-cuts to character education. It takes time and effort in large amounts. I have every sympathy with parents who wonder where either they or their children are going to find this time. Find it, however, they must! Granted that this will not be brought about by simple wishful thinking, but there can be found ways of achieving this end.

One group of parents in our project adopted what they called the surgical method. Each one listed the demands on his or her time, including the amount of time required for each item. They then arranged these items in order of their importance, ranking

the character education of their children high in the list. Starting at the top of the list they added cumulatively until they had used up the day's twenty-four hours. The rest of the list was simply cut off, both there and in their daily lives.

In our project there are scores of parents who are investing great quantities of time with their children, and for the most part finding it more fun than those activities that have had to be eliminated in doing so. That is especially significant at this stage in our project when we have far too few practical suggestions to give them in doing the job. They must often try and try again until they find methods of teaching these attitudes to their children. Furthermore, they give reports to us of their efforts, thus helping hundreds of other parents in the future to do the job more easily. Are these unusual parents? Yes, they are. Nevertheless, when parents are really awake to the possibilities, there will be many thousands of them willing to contribute to solving these dynamic problems of character education.

An interesting phase of this problem is that parents of high school young people often feel that it is both more difficult and less important for them to coöperate than in the case of the younger ages. This is far from being the case. *The concepts which we are trying to teach our teen-agers are so complex and difficult that unless parents do discuss them intensively and bring about repetition, understanding, conviction and application at home, there is hardly even a remote chance that youth can learn them.* If it is more difficult to achieve this in the busy lives of both parents and youth, it is all the more important that ways of doing so be found. There are now thousands of children enrolled in the church schools working with us. The number grows annually. We receive many hundreds of parents' reports every week to help us in our quest for practical methods of teaching our children the principles Jesus set forth.

Another difficulty comes about because many popular methods of character education have not been scrutinized by scientific measurement, to reveal the limits of their effectiveness. Many parents still suffer from the delusion that they can delegate the character education of their children to such institutions as the

school and Sunday school. It is astonishing how many honestly believe that if their children go to Sunday school with fair regularity, and memorize a golden text from time to time, they, the parents, can be completely confident of their future adult integrity. Not infrequently the Church has encouraged them in this belief. Surely no more cruel deception can be practiced on parents, even if they are partners in the deception. The laws of character education are inviolable. They demand seven-day-a-week effort. Principles must be taught until thoroughly understood and enthusiastically accepted. Then they must be applied in every relevant phase of daily life. This must be continued until the principle involved becomes an integral part of the child's personality. When parents realize this fully, they will steer clear of the short-cut methods of character education, whatever they are.

Finally, when such methods as these are put into practice many old approaches are necessarily discarded or seriously modified. There will be among parents some who will question seriously the apparent loss of some traditional values which they are confident are essential for their children. These people are often among the most sincere and consecrated parents in our churches. The most numerous of them are those who feel that the church school should be devoted entirely to Bible study. These parents are urged to examine carefully the results to be obtained for their children by the use of various methods. If it is Christian character they want, let them judge all methods in terms of their effectiveness in developing it. Even Bible study must not be assumed to be character education unless it can be shown that it actually brings about growth of character. Our methods tend to put the center of Bible study in the home rather than in the church school. That is because our data indicates clearly that this is the only way in which we can make sure that our children learn either the Bible or its great social concepts for their lives. The fact is we do use Bible study extensively in our program. Our use of it, however, is determined by how it can be made most effective in inspiring Christian character in our children.

These, then, are the most important problems relating to the home's share in character education. It is not necessary to men-

tion the many common human weaknesses to which parents are addicted, along with the rest of us—sensitiveness to criticism, "standing up for our rights," and readiness at the drop of a hat to rebel because of "the principle of the thing." Of course, they are often too easily discouraged and fatigued by difficult assignments. It is all too common for them to judge character education methods by their flaws and to throw out the baby with the bath. Procrastination and giving up easily are as common here as elsewhere in human kind. They may even forget that they are working for their children and become angry at some leader in the church or school in which they are working. Despite all these problems, the basic sincerity of parents and their honest desire to have the best for their children can hardly be questioned. The main point is, we see no insoluble problems in this matter of home coöperation. Problems there are and difficult ones. They can and will be solved. The home will one day become the great institution in society it ought to be, the only foundation on which a genuine Christion civilization can be built.

A picture of the role of parents in the Character Research Project will show the extent and nature of coöperation which is necessary and which we know can be obtained, because hundreds of parents in our project are giving it.

In the first place, parents must be thoroughly informed about the Project and their role in it. In most of our churches, to enroll your child in the church school, your introduction to the Project would be threefold. The child would be enrolled as a visitor until you were fully informed and were willing to coöperate completely with the church school. Your first instructions would come from the minister or church school director, who would explain the general nature of the Project and urge you to read the literature about it. The next would be the church school teacher in whose class your child would be enrolled, who would interview you in connection with the current unit of work, using both the interview outline for interests and adjustments and the unit attitude scale. Finally, the parent supervisor for the age-level group of your child would explain to you your obligations and opportunities in the parent classes.

Parents are asked to promise four things. In the first place, they pledge the regular attendance of the child at church school. This is defined as follows. If an excuse is not good enough to keep the child out of public school, it is not sufficient reason for church school absence. We are trying to make every single lesson an indispensable one. Such things as weekend camps, guests for Sunday dinner, and the like are not acceptable excuses for absence.

Then secondly, they promise to carry out the home assignments. As has been pointed out, on every lesson plan there is a Guide for Parents. When our first curriculum was written this home assignment was usually inadequate and difficult to carry out, especially if there were several children in the family. About all it contained was the statement of an attitude to be taught and a few tentative suggestions on how to teach it. The parents' task was to take the attitude and the suggested material, and teach the attitude to their child using whatever additional methods they could find with which to do so. They were expected to accomplish this even if the lesson material proved to be impractical or did not fit their particular child. They were urged to try and try again to find practical ways of doing so. They had to find time to do it, materials that challenged the child, and ways of applying it to his daily life. However, with succeeding revisions of our lesson materials, based on the achievements of these parents, this requirement becomes increasingly easy to meet.

Thirdly, all this must be described in a *Parent Report* and turned in to the church school office, first for the information of the teachers, then sent to the Union College Laboratory as a basis for revising the lessons and making them more practical and effective. The increasing number and quality of these Parent Reports forecast a great day in the power of Christian homes.

The fourth requirement of the parents is full participation in the parent classes. In most churches parent classes are held every week. Attendance of at least one parent in each family is required. In most cases, fathers attend this group quite as regularly as mothers. These parent classes are highly organized, usually by the age-level group of their children. They study methods of character education, and work with the church school staff in coördinating

the work of the home and the church school. They help in many ways in the actual work of the church school. Indeed, in most cases, the staff is largely recruited from this group. Often couples teach classes together as teacher and assistant teacher.

Parents, of course, are human. Some of them are too busy about many things to have time for all of this. Others become discouraged at a few failures and decide that the whole thing is futile. Still others, whose children's problems are a direct result of their parents' maladjustments, close their eyes to the possibilities. These last parents produce ninety per cent of our "insoluble" problems. The fact remains that when parents do not coöperate, this actually means that they do not really believe in the value of the program. As has been said before, when parents are fully convinced that something is good for their children, they demand it with all their personal and material resources. Charging tuition would not only not decrease our enrollments, it would increase them, and unless it was exorbitant, would not exclude any serious-minded parents, whatever their socio-economic scale. This was first proved by the University Congregational Church of Seattle, Washington.

The parent problem, of course, is not simple. There are still many factors in it to be solved. However, in our own work thus far we have spent very little time trying to "persuade" parents to coöperate. There have been so many of them who have worked untiringly that all our efforts have had to be devoted to helping them do their jobs more effectively.

Finally, in this discussion of the role of parents, there is the problem of how they are to be trained for the job. If theirs is the most important task, they will need to have many skills to do it well. They cannot take years of graduate work to learn the necessary principles of child psychology, the methods of modern educational practice, and the background in the Bible and other content materials. To suggest that we have found final answers to this problem would be absurd. Every year new methods and principles are discovered which add enormously to the quality of the work done by the parents in our Project. Perhaps a brief look at some of our findings will indicate how this parent participation works out in practice and what results may be expected from it in the future.

In the previous discussion of some of our procedures, it was pointed out that teacher training and parent training traditionally have consisted for the most part in so-called courses. Parents attending these classes and hearing the principles of teaching and of child development described are expected to go home and to be able to apply them. When one examines the laws of learning, a few of which have been described, it seems highly improbable that such a program of training is of more than superficial value. Hearing lectures is far from even memorizing principles. Memorizing principles is even further from understanding and accepting them. Understanding them, as shown by recent research, has surprisingly little relationship to being able to apply them. When to all this is added the fact that it is very difficult to get even a majority of our parents into such classes, it should be clear that this is not a practical answer to the problem. How, then, can it be done?

We use what is proving to be an effective and practical method. *We include in every lesson plan the principles of teaching necessary for parents as well as teachers to use in teaching that particular lesson,* and indicate how these principles are to be applied in doing so. As the Parent Reports give us practical experiential data, we augment these with an increasing amount of illustrative material of all kinds, which can be applied to almost every shade of individual difference. This, of course, eliminates the necessity for parents and teachers to master professionally the intricacies of child psychology in order to apply them to the many problems that arise at home and at school.

This method may well prove to be one of the most significant contributions of the Union College Character Research Project. Adult education has long been recognized as a major need in our democracy. With the increasing number and complexity of tensions in our civilization, the training of children becomes more and more difficult. Child study groups by the hundreds spring up. Their over-all value is probably not large. For one thing, too few attend them. For the most part, those who do attend do not work at the job hard enough to master the principles presented. And even if they do, as has been pointed out, the correlation between

a knowledge of principles and the ability to apply them is negligible. Our method, made possible by our having a definite, positive program, is to give with each assignment a simple statement of the psychological and educational methods necessary to teach it. This is accompanied by suggestions for the more common varieties of individual differences. It seems probable that if the adult education movement is to succeed, this principle will need to be applied in all of its fields of activity.

Another important principle which has emerged from our experience is that parents are becoming increasingly aware that these attitudes affect them quite as much as their children. *Of the many methods which have been tried to teach these basic attitudes in the home, one is emerging as far superior to any other in effectiveness; namely, that of growing with the child.* Parent Reports are filled with stories of parents and children learning these truths together. Here is one home in which a mother presents a problem at the daily family council. She has had an unhappy experience with another person. Her children, using the Lord's Prayer as a guide, decide how she must behave in the matter. The experience is quite as effective for her as it is growth in spiritual thinking for her children. Here is a father who sees in his son's alarming exaggerations of his achievements, a trait he recognizes in himself. Together the two try to make their "wishful thinking" come true by actually achieving the things they had bragged about. Indeed one parent leader asked, "For whom was this program really intended, the children or their parents?" A minister commented that even if our major objective were to change this generation rather than the next, this would still be the best way to achieve that end.

The scope of this volume does not permit a full description of the many interesting things being done by the parents associated with our Project. The family team spirit grows with astonishing rapidity. In family councils the youngest as well as the oldest discusses family finances and how the parents will vote in the coming election, as well as the problems of family interrelationships. All of these problems are solved by thinking them through carefully and rationally in terms of Christian principles. Our studies

of great homes have led us increasingly to believe in strict but fair discipline, which the children come to see as coaching. Along with this must be included Horace Bushnell's famous concept of gradual emancipation. What we have called emancipation Christmas presents, which consist of each child being given some new responsibility or released from some former control, have become an institution in hundreds of our homes. But most significant of all, these homes now have a positive program of character education to replace the old hit-or-miss method of the problem theory.

There can be little question that the future of our civilization depends far more on the family than on United Nations councils and assemblies. Some will hold that parents cannot and will not meet this challenge. Certainly no one will question that the demands we make on parents in our Project are great indeed. Yet one church reports that the attendance at its church school was 904 on the second Sunday of the year it entered our Project, as compared to 365 on the corresponding Sunday of the preceding year. Surely this demonstrates the reaction of parents to such a challenge.

Chapter XVII *Question Marks*

IT TAKES TIME TO TEACH

Friday, September 26. I stayed home with Quentin, my ten-year-old, today, as he has asthma again. I got out my lesson plans and started working on them. Quentin watched me for a while and then asked, "Mommy, how much do you get paid to teach Sunday school?" "I don't get any money for teaching Sunday school," I answered. "You mean you do all that work for nothing?" he asked incredulously. "It's true that I don't get any money for teaching," I answered, "but if by teaching Sunday school and 'doing all this work' as you say, I can teach just one boy to be a better person, that's all the pay I want." He shook his head but was tactful enough not to say aloud what his expression said clearly to me. "Poor Mommy, she's crazy to do all that work for nothing." [1]

It may seem, with all this emphasis on the home, that the teacher assumes a minor role, whereas, in the traditional church school, scout troop, or Hi-Y club, so far as character education is concerned, the teacher does the whole job. But in this type of seven-day-a-week character education, these leaders play their role for only a short period once a week, whereas the parents are with the children continually. Of what real importance can they be in this picture?

The answer is, they are many times more important than ever. In the first place, the teacher has the most dramatic role in the scene, and now for the first time can hope for real results. In the past, the task has been a relatively hopeless one. As we are always telling parents, "Not only will we not promise to do anything for

[1] Jones, Edna L., *Squirt Guns and Souls, The Diary of a Church School Teacher.*

This and the following quotations in this chapter are from the actual diary of one of our church school teachers. She and her husband constitute one of our finest teaching teams. All names for purposes of necessary anonymity are fictitious.

your child without your coöperation, we will promise not to." Many a consecrated soul has spent countless hours throughout a lifetime in the relatively futile role of being a Sunday school teacher. In a few cases he or she may have been a great influence in the lives of some of the pupils. The world owes these people much. Using these new principles, however, and with home coöperation, the same teacher could have been more effective by a hundred fold. For, with parent coöperation, dramatic and thrilling results can be and are being obtained.

Wednesday, October 15. A parent reports that, "Since Eddie's last week's lesson was one on, 'Myself last—others first,' the whole family is entering into it and are having a contest to see who wins the prize of putting themselves last and others first. However, we had to hold an emergency meeting of the Family Club tonight. Eddie has been recording times when he makes his younger sister, Sue, wash first, go to bed first, etc. Sue contends that this is unfair!" The mother, instead of coming right out and telling Eddie to stop the funny business, had a club meeting and let them decide what good deeds should count for the contest. Eddie admitted that he had been teasing Sue, and docked himself the number of times he had "cheated." Now they're swinging into this contest in earnest.

In the second place, we have found that the degree and effectiveness of parent coöperation is pretty much a function of the teacher. When the Parent Reports come to our laboratory we can tell by reading them which classes had the ablest teachers. Given a teacher who will work hard at the job, using the adaptation procedure to the fullest to make the lesson effective with each individual child, it is not difficult to persuade the parents to enter into the process with enthusiasm and thoroughness.

Tuesday, October 28. I have been getting more Parent Reports in than I did last year, which pleases me very much. I had a report from Mrs. Prem about the success of the individual stories on telling the truth. (I don't know why she thinks I'm a magician on these stories. She's the one who told me about the chocolate cake experience. Almost every situation that I gave had some basis of truth from things the parents told me.) She says that because of this story she and Ronnie talked often about the value of telling the truth. After their discussion, Ronnie admitted he was the one who had taken money from the church school envelopes.

Tuesday, November 10. Another parent says, "In going over Henry's church school lesson with him tonight, I had him read the Parable of the Sower from the Bible. His father, who was present, asked if he knew what 'stony ground' meant. Henry said, 'Sure, it means like when you were trying to explain the Sunday school lesson two weeks ago and I didn't listen but just fooled. It fell on "stony ground."' Asked about 'good ground,' he answered, 'Like at a birthday party they say, "All those that want ice cream and cake come in the dining room!" That sure falls on good ground because we all make a dash for the dining room. We hear the words and then we sure do something about them.'"

The reader will not have proceeded this far without realizing that the task of the teacher is not an easy one. The teacher who expects to read over the church school lesson on Saturday night and talk about it superficially the next morning will quickly resign when faced with this job. This represents an improvement, for the vacancy is regularly filled with some able man or woman to whom this new kind of teaching represents a challenge to the best that is in him.

Monday, October 13. Yesterday's experience has certainly taught me a valuable lesson; namely, to start my church school preparation early in the week, so that I will have a week to think about it. Then I won't have "too little, too late" as I did yesterday.

The role of the teacher in our plan will best be seen by a picture of what happens to a person who decides to become a teacher. Let the reader judge whether or not such a job is interesting and challenging. In one church in Detroit, in which the Project was introduced in only half of the departments at first, the director reported this experience. Men and women who were approached about teaching under this plan were "scared to death," but it became almost impossible to get anyone to teach in the other part of the church school. It is a difficult and exacting job; that is why so many people like it. Visitors in one of our schools said of the teachers there, "They gave a sense of having high vision, of feeling the challenge of a genuinely important responsibility."

Friday, October 17. Think I have a fairly good idea for the lesson Sunday. Worked on it a couple of hours more today.

Saturday, October 18. I've typed individual stories for each boy for Sunday. It took a long time—I hope it is worth it.

Sunday, October 19. A wonderful lesson! I feel we really accomplished something today. The stories seemed to hit the boys just right, because they said, "Boy, you really give us hard problems." Grover needs this trait emphasis more than anyone else, but he got the point.

A new teacher would first spend a great deal of time in observation. This might be in the class room, or listening to recordings of classes being taught, interviews being held, parent and teacher discussions, and speeches by authorities in the various aspects of our program. Our basic texts would be read, our materials studied and staff and department meetings attended. It is no longer necessary for any teacher to go before a class without a considerable period of very practical training.

The first active participation is likely to be in the capacity of an assistant. Every class needs two teachers. During the instructional part of the program, careful observation records need to be made of the reactions of the various children in the class. The teacher cannot do this adequately and present the lesson at the same time. During the project period, having as its purpose the task of helping every member of the class apply the attitude being taught, the assistant, as well as the teacher, will find his hands full if the task is to be well done. In planning new lessons the assistant will be of increasing help to the teacher in carrying out the adaptation procedure.

Saturday, November 15. James (husband and assistant teacher) and I talked about the lesson again, and we decided that if I leave the room and he tells the class of a time when he took some toys from a store and even got arrested, it might start the boys telling about things that they have done—for certainly they haven't done anything nearly that bad.

Sunday, November 16. Oh, no? The boys really loosened up for James. (They never would for me.) The difference between them and James was that they never got caught. I think this is one of the most profitable lessons we have had. That was due to James. There are just some things a woman can't teach as well as a man.

Then comes the time when our trainee is assigned to full charge of the class. His first task will be the interviews with the parents. The first of these are usually undertaken before church school opens in the fall. In them the aptitudes and interests of the child

are described. The child's adjustments at home, school and on the playground are evaluated. The attitudes to be taught during the next unit are discussed and the child is rated for each one. His behavior relevant to each is described, for the teacher's effectiveness will be in direct proportion to his knowledge of the individual child. These interviews last from one to three hours each. Their value is inestimable.

Tuesday, September 2. Church school starts in less than three weeks. The director stopped in tonight to bring us our attitude scales and also to give James a little pep talk about helping me with my fifteen active third graders.

Wednesday, September 3. Tried out the new attitude scales on James. There is something wrong with them and James nearly had apoplexy trying to answer them. I realized that the reason he was so upset was because secretly he is very proud of the Project and wants everything to be perfect.

Thursday, September 4. Called all my parents for interviews. All of them signed up for a definite night except my two doubtful parents. I left them until last. One of them, who came last year with fire in her eyes because the Project involves so much work, was wonderful and readily took one of the nights. The other reluctantly took a night, but I'll bet dollars to doughnuts they don't come.

Tuesday, September 9. The Flemings came for their interview. She's a peach and just coöperates beautifully. Vance is certainly a corker. She says a psychiatrist told them that if they could stand him until he is twelve, he will calm down some. I've asked them to "frisk" Vance every Sunday before he comes to church school. He still manages to appear with a few deadly weapons, however.

Tuesday, September 16. I interviewed Mrs. Ludley about Perce. This was my first interview with her. I realized as we went through it, that Perce has been in my class for a whole year and I've never really known anything about him. He's so quiet and such a good worker. He needs this unit more than any other boy I have. I shudder when I think of how close I came to missing it. What if I had not had this personal interview?

Then all the information obtained from the interviews must be transferred to the Teacher's Record Form in the way already described.

Monday, September 15. I've been showing the new Teacher's Record Forms to all the parents at the interviews, so they can see how we use

all this information in teaching. James suggested tonight that it would be even more effective to fill in the name, address, adjustments, aptitudes, and interests while the parents are still here. It was fun. It takes lots of time in the beginning, but I'm sure each week it will be infinitely easier with a clear picture of each boy's attitude in front of you, than it was under the old way when you took a long shot in the dark and hoped you hit someone in your class.

The teacher is now ready to tackle the lessons themselves. Sometimes alone, sometimes in departmental staff meetings, the long difficult task of the adaptation procedure must be carried out. As the teacher considers how the lesson must be presented for each individual child, every fact gleaned from the parent interview will be valuable. Often it will need to be augmented by a phone call to the parents for more information. In many ways this is the most interesting as well as the most difficult part of the whole task. It requires all the skill and training a person has, to do it well.

Saturday, November 29. Well, Thanksgiving is past and my guests have departed. Now to make out the charts for the boys to make a Personality Profile of themselves for tomorrow's lesson. It will be very interesting to them (and to me too) if I can get them to tell the truth about themselves. I've put in the traits that the group need to learn, using the adaptation procedure.

Sunday, November 30. A wonderful lesson! The boys did a beautiful job, and rated themselves almost as I would have rated them. Bless their hearts! After they had finished, I listed the one school subject that was especially hard for each boy and then together we made up contest rules for a "try, try again" (and not "cry, cry again") contest. The boys gave themselves strict rules. For the two boys who picked spelling, it was decreed that they write fifty difficult words a day for six days. Some wanted to do things they liked to do, but were reminded that the idea is to do the things that are hard for you.

Next comes the final planning of the lesson. All the ideas developed during the adaptation procedure must now be integrated into the lesson plan so that it is still a unified whole and yet never loses sight of a single individual child in the class. This is what has come to be called drama-type education, because the lesson plan is constructed like a drama, with unity and plot, yet emphasizing the personality of each individual role.

Saturday, October 4. James and I worked on the lesson tonight. I've been thinking about it for a couple of days. I think I'll divide the class. I'll take half and let James take the other half. I've made definite assignments for the class. They are designed to have each boy teach the very thing to the class that he is weak in at home.

Sunday, October 5. The plan worked very well. The boys were interested in the subject matter. Henry, who is usually a disciplinary problem, was very coöperative and worked hard on the Bible verse. Billy is really remarkable. He daydreams and looks as if he were off in another world, but when I ask him a question he shoots the answer at me so quickly that it surprises me. Pryce always comes through with good work. I think the idea sunk in. Why doesn't he apply at home what he learns in class?

Then the lesson is taught. Sometimes it succeeds with such completeness as to be a mountain-top experience for teacher and children. Sometimes it fails quite as completely. More often it is neither one nor the other. The thrill of success is the teacher's greatest reward. The challenge of failure is his strongest incentive to try again. Each week an evaluation of every child in the class is made in the Teacher's Record Form.

Saturday, September 20. We've worked hard on this first lesson. We have individual stories on each trait in the Teacher's Record Form. I have a story for each trait from their own experiences, so it should work well.

Sunday, September 21. It didn't! I came out of church school today completely discouraged and positive that not one of them got one thing out of the lesson. Vance and Henry raised Cain. Vance whipped out his squirt gun and baptized the whole class. The room was in an uproar. Just as I got them quieted, Vance made a wisecrack that set the whole crowd in disorder again. I'll have to remember that Vance is there and frame my questions better. But when I sat down to record "Evidences of Success" in the Record Form, imagine my surprise when I discovered, helped by James' notes, that six of the boys had gotten a good understanding of the traits. So in spite of Vance's calling me "Dimples" and the squirt gun, maybe they got something after all.

At the end of the unit, the parents are again interviewed. This time the task is two-fold. First, it is to evaluate the success of the unit. Its second purpose is to consider the attitudes to be emphasized during the next unit. Since there are three units each year, there are four sets of these parent interviews.

Wednesday, December 3. The Flemings came for their second interview tonight. I do enjoy her so much. She is very helpful, has a grand sense of humor, and told me many stories which should prove valuable in the class during the next unit, especially with Vance. He is improving at home, church school and school. I know it is the direct result of all the work they have done. She hasn't missed one lesson nor one Parent Report. Her only criticism was that there are not enough definite assignments in the Parent Guide.

This is a brief picture of the teacher's role. Of course there are the complications due to occasional lapses in home coöperation and others due to the failure of the teacher to lead into the home assignments. There are the unpredictable group situations which so often arise like summer thunder showers wherever dynamic youth are gathered together. The teacher may drop from sheer exhaustion at the end of a class period, but all agree that there is never a dull moment.

Sunday, October 12. That which I feared has come upon me. I knew this lesson wouldn't be successful and it wasn't. Ted and Ronny, the two boys I had depended upon to get things started were absent! Vance and his squirt gun again! Perce and his rubber bands! Henry's desire to talk a lot and show off. I just prayed last night that the boys would loosen up and confide at church school even though they don't at home. I can see now that God expects us to back up our prayers with action, and it was up to me to make this lesson a success. There *is* a way. I wish we'd found it.

Tuesday, October 23. We've just worked four hours writing a dramatization of the two stories about Peter—one where he was afraid to tell the truth, and the second where he had the courage to tell the truth. We've used the petition, "Lead us—not into temptation" in three different places. It's such an important trait for them to learn, and I don't want to muff this chance. I think a little prayer and thought on this the next few days will help.

Sunday, October 26. The boys were pleased with the dramatization. James read the stories from the Bible, but they couldn't follow the theme. Then I told the stories in the words of our prepared dramatization and acted it out. I got a thrill watching their faces as I acted each role. When I gave them the script to act out themselves they put everything they had in it. Only Vance misbehaved but the others ignored his wisecracks because of their interest in the dramatization.

Can all this be achieved? We cannot succeed without effective teachers any more than without coöperative parents. It is entirely

possible for the best materials to be completely futile in the hands of a poor teacher. As for the parents, we often tell those with whom we work, half facetiously, half seriously, that if we are teaching anything they do not wish their children to learn, all they need to do about it is nothing at all. This is because, *without parent co-operation, the best efforts of the best church school teacher will have been cancelled out before Sunday dinner is over.* Our results lead to the conclusion that effective character education cannot be done without skilled and persistent parent-teacher coöperation. Having said this, what of the outlook? What of the willingness of people to be teachers in such a program as this, as well as of parents to carry out their share of the work?

With regard to the teaching problem especially, we can count on the basic drive toward achievement as being the strongest motivation. As one of our ministers put it, "When there is something worth doing, there are always people willing to do it." We cannot say that the churches working with us have no staff recruiting problem; they do. But we can say that it is far less of a problem than in most other church schools. Furthermore, outside observers agree that the quality of our staffs is unusually high. The reason for this seems to be, in part at least, because our curricula are so difficult to teach. Love of achievement is probably the strongest drive in human nature. Football is not more popular than tiddlywinks because it is easier, but for exactly the opposite reason. Churches often make their biggest psychological mistake in being afraid to ask people to do too much. The fact is that, by and large, the more difficult the task, the more people there are who want to do it.

The time will come when our volunteer workers in character education will be paid. Indeed, in the churches in this project, asking as much as they do of these people, they probably ought to be paid at least enough to take care of such resultant expenses as securing "baby sitters" and assistance in housework. Our teachers are fully aware of the many other sacrifices necessary to do this task. For example, they are usually people who themselves feel deeply the need of the inspiration and aid of the morning church service. (Most of our church schools have sessions which

overlap the church service.) Despite this fact there are hundreds who do it gladly. A great majority of these are parents who recognize that experience of this sort is of inestimable value to them at home.

An interesting tendency now growing up in our Project churches, due to the need for two teachers in each class, is that of married couples teaching together. In one of our church schools forty such couples were on the staff at the time of this writing. They have found the joint experience, especially using the adaptation procedure, a thrilling and challenging one.

Friday, December 12. As I look back over this unit, I realize more and more the importance of James' part in teaching these lessons. When we talk over the lesson on Saturday night before I write the final draft of it, we pretty much decide who will handle what. On lessons where I use individual stories, I usually do the writing and planning because I have had the interviews with the parents and can picture the home situation more vividly. On lessons where we want the boys to tell any of their wrongdoings or exchange "man to man" confidences, I usually fade to the back of the room and write as much of the discussion as I can. When we get home and compare notes, it is surprising the number of things that James has noticed and observed which escaped me, and vice versa.

James' discipline is much better than mine, and often the lesson would have failed completely if he had not handled a disciplinary case by a few sharp words or by removing the offender from the room and telling him what he thought of his actions out in the hall. I believe it takes the two of us, one supplementing the other, just as it takes both a mother and father to develop a happy home.

Chapter XVIII *Question Marks*

YOU ARE ONLY YOUNG ONCE

THE question of probabilities is not yet fully answered. If we are to do effective character education, we must also win the coöperation of youth. "You may lead a horse to water but you cannot make him drink" may not be completely apropos, but it is pretty close to it. When one estimates the potential loss in power of personality and in adult leadership due to the efforts of our young people, from the nursery to the college level, to prevent themselves from getting an education, both secular and religious, it is appalling. Is this just human nature or can something be done about it?

In a recent radio program on child psychology, parents asked an unnamed "expert" about various problems they had with their children. The expert's advice was invariable. No matter whether the problem concerned a kindergartener with temper tantrums, a third grader who rebelled against school, a junior high boy spending more time with gangs than on education, a high school student thinking only of dates and never of history, or a college student choosing the social advantages of higher learning rather than an education, the expert always answered, "Do not worry about it; it is just the age level. It is perfectly natural." That, I do not believe. The lives of great men—or at least of most of them—remind us that if we are to leave any significant footprints on the sands of time, we must start early. Most great men were well on their way by the age of twelve. It is no accident that Jesus knew at the age of twelve that he must be about his Father's business. Relatively speaking, there have been only a handful of great men and women in all history, whereas the upper third of the population has sufficient native endowment for greatness. If we can discover and apply the laws of character development, especially those which

will challenge our youth at an early age to the task of seeking their potential, it can be achieved.

The most difficult problem in this matter of commanding the coöperation of the children themselves is that of enlisting their persistent participation in the routine day-to-day work of the program. Getting occasional spurts of enthusiasm is quite simple. Unfortunately, this is not sufficient. Recently, two parents commented on their children's reactions to the program in one of our churches. Both parents were serious-minded, sincere people, deeply interested in their children. In both cases the children were fine youngsters and highly endowed. In one case, the parents expressed deep satisfaction because their child was so happy and keenly interested. The others reported that their children were no longer willing to attend at all. Of course, children are not always wise enough to make such decisions for themselves. *If parents, therefore, are fully convinced of the value of the program for them, they will be wise in insisting on participation, just as they would in the public school.* The fact remains that if we can gain children's enthusiastic coöperation, the task of character education is far easier and undoubtedly a great deal more effective. Indeed, when one considers what could be done with a generation of children who would coöperate, it makes him see more fully than ever the tremendous importance of finding the laws governing this coöperation. What are the probabilities of our solving this problem? It will be solved only by a great deal of painstaking research, and there are already some significant leads that give promise of success. Let us look at some of the motivations which do govern the behavior of our youth.

In the first place, what are the influences which determine, for the most part, our children's enthusiasm or lack of it in such programs? If the teacher is interesting, that is half the battle. Unfortunately, there are not enough good teachers, to say nothing of the fact that children do not all agree on what is a good teacher. Furthermore, some dull teachers have more of permanent value to give than some of those who are more entertaining. We must somehow persuade our children, to the extent their maturity makes

it possible of course, to judge their education in terms of the amount and value of things learned, instead of in terms of the sugarcoating with which it is presented. Almost any good story teller, with enough illustrative narratives, both fact and fiction, can hold the attention of any group of any age level. Unfortunately, even if the stories have inspiring morals, it does not follow that the children will or can apply them to their daily lives. Then, too, as has already been pointed out, it takes exposure, repetition, understanding, conviction and application to learn a character attitude. We must find ways of convincing our children that the value of a lesson is in how well it is learned and how fully it can be applied to their daily lives, not in how thrilling it is to listen to.

Again, children like to go where their friends go and do what their friends do. They also do not like to go where their friends do not go and do what their friends do not do. It is difficult indeed to persuade one child from a certain social group to attend a church school where none of his crowd goes, especially where some other group is present in large numbers. This becomes particularly significant when it is a matter of age level. Twelfth graders often resent bitterly being required to attend a young people's group made up largely of "such infants" as ninth and tenth graders. The value of the program is as nothing to them when compared with this towering social barrier. The resultant wasted potential is appalling. There must be ways of challenging our high school young people to see the insignificance of such matters as compared with the values to be had from mastering the spiritual laws which govern the universe. Related to this is the fact that most people like to go where the crowd goes. This holds for adults as well as for children and young people. Also it is not uncommon for adults to evaluate youth organizations in terms of the numerical size of their membership. There can be no objection to numbers. Numbers are highly desirable. You cannot teach absentees. But surely this is not the way to judge the quality of the product. Surely, too, there must be ways of persuading our youth to look for true values, even where only two or three are gathered together.

Another motivation, actually of much less value than com-

monly supposed, is the matter of "having fun." "We go to that church because the kids there have dances and things, and have lots of fun." A study of successful youth groups will show that this factor is not nearly as important as most people think. None can question the value of healthy social programs for our youth, but too much recreation becomes decreation. There are values many times more to be desired than this. We shall some day find ways of making our children choose these greater values and keep the lesser ones in their right place. The counterpart of this social drive is bound up in the common allergy many of our children seem to have for the work of learning. If the church school program has much solidity, it is "too much like school." Actually, this objection is far more vocal than from the heart. Usually it will be found that in the long run our youth can distinguish between the superficial and the real. We will find many of our youth who want to take programs of depth and difficulty, if they have value. Adult leaders are too often fooled by the surface complaints of those youth who say and even think that they would rather invest their religious education opportunities in having fun. Living, as we do, in a Christian democracy, at least if it is to survive, there must be found ways of inspiring our youth to want to study to show themselves approved unto God, mastering His laws and preparing for their future responsibilities and opportunities.

One very real problem to which seeking the coöperation of youth gives rise is the danger of producing self-righteousness. We certainly do not want our children, like the Pharisee in the Temple, thanking the Lord that they are not as other men, lest other men be thankful for the same reason. If, then, our children set out to learn certain attitudes, will priggishness be the inevitable result? If our goals were so chosen that seeking them constituted self-righteousness, the point would be well taken. The attitudes of this Project are all parts of one firm conviction; namely, that the Christian philosophy of life is the one most in tune with the universe, the will of God. Does being completely convinced that the concept of vicarious sacrifice is the most dynamic social law there is, and being determined to apply it in every aspect of one's social behavior brand one as a prig? To try to learn and apply

it without being told what it is you are being taught, would be like trying to teach Einstein's theory to students as an incidental part of their extra-curricular activities without their finding out that they were learning it. It obviously cannot be done. Seeking to know and apply the universal laws, natural or spiritual, is certainly a healthy form of righteousness.

One thing at which our youth do rebel, and perhaps unduly so, is being "preached" at. Behind this, to be sure, is a healthy antipathy toward this very idea of being goody-goodies. The alternative, however, surely does not consist in refusing to master the spiritual laws that constitute the will of God. A scientist is not regarded as lacking in humility because he seeks to discover and apply the natural laws. Why should it be otherwise with the laws on which the future of our civilization depends? We must and are finding ways of overcoming among our youth this prejudice against character education.

This feeling is not confined to the church school. Our parents, who are trying to make character education really a seven-day-a-week process, find that very often the task of discussing such ideas with the child meets with strong resistance. To be sure, this verbal rebellion needs to be evaluated with some caution. Most of us profess a dislike for many things which we really admire. Children actually gain a sense of security and confidence from strict discipline, even though they grumble at each specific application of it. In character education the home task is the most difficult partly because it is here that the necessary practice of repetition must take place. There can be little doubt, therefore, that parents must teach their children these lessons whether their enthusiasm matches the parents' insistence or not. The fact remains, that if we can gain the children's wholehearted coöperation, the task will be much easier and probably more effective.

When this problem arises in such phases of character education as the boys' work program of the YMCA where voluntary participation is so essential to its survival, the question of the child's interest is still more important. Those working with us in the YMCA are trying frankly to achieve as much interest on the part of the boys as possible. At the same time they are fully

aware of the fact that interest, as such, is not only not a guarantee of effective character education, at times it may even be a hindrance, if it detracts from the lesson at hand. Nor are they being deceived by the superficial complainings which may often be disguised statements of admiration for the value of the program. Here, again, we are faced with the clear responsibility of giving our youth the values they need, whether they always fully recognize those values or not. Nevertheless, it would be a far easier task if boys in our clubs and camps would give their enthusiastic coöperation to this task.

How, then, shall we challenge our youth? Surely all of them can see the logic of the following fact; namely, that our present adult generation has certainly not done well enough in creating a social order. If our children are to achieve survival, much less happiness, they will certainly need to do a better job than we have done. This much is clear. What is less commonly seen, though equally evident, is that this means that if they are like us, and no better, they cannot expect to do a better job than we. *One growing generation looks very much like another. Until one comes along which is clearly and vastly superior, even in its youth, we shall never have the calibre of leadership our country and the world so badly need.*

Granted that we need a different calibre of youth if we are to produce a greater generation, in what ways can we challenge them to live differently than we have? One generation of children and young people looks pretty much like any other. This is so true that we have come to think of the typical behavior of the various age levels as inborn characteristics of human nature which are therefore unchangeable. In the Character Research Project we are asking youth of all ages to do things which no preceding generation has ever done. How can we convince them of the desirability of doing these things?

Our hope of doing so lies in two outstanding characteristics of young people. The first is their burning desire for high achievement. This is the motivation for much of their behavior, even the vandalism of juvenile delinquency. They are attracted far more to a difficult task than to an easy one. The other characteristic is

their willingness to face facts, especially those proved by science. *There are five common beliefs which have been held by youth for many generations, which have now been proved to be false.* These five beliefs are responsible for most of their failures to achieve their highest potential. Let us consider what their reactions will be if they learn the true facts about these beliefs.

The first of these beliefs is that greatness is something reserved for only a few people and thrust upon them by fate when they are adults. If this were true, it would follow that what they do during their youth has nothing to do with the matter. Let us present to young people the evidence brought out in the first chapter from a study of great men. It reveals astonishing facts about the scope of human potential. Its data show clearly that at least a third of the population have sufficient native endowment to achieve greatness. The biographies of these men show also that those who achieve greatness start early in their lives. They were distinguished even in their youth by "persistence of motive and effort, confidence in their abilities, and great strength or force of character."[1] It follows that a superior generation will come about only if these things characterize a much larger proportion of it during its youth.

A second common delusion of youth is that happiness comes primarily from fun. This is the idea that underlies so much of their mad rush for pleasure. The young people of many generations have condemned themselves to lives of dull mediocrity and relative unhappiness by this too great emphasis on fun during their youth. The fact is, happiness is far more dependent on achievement than on fun. The validity of this principle is obvious. The thrill of football is not just in pleasure as such, for its characteristics are fatigue, great effort, and pain. It is the love of achievement which makes it popular. No one would climb a mountain if happiness consisted in satisfying the appetites. This drive for achievement is proportional to the level of one's native endowment. This very fact indicates that our ablest youth will find happiness only in high achievement. They will accomplish this only if they prepare for it thoroughly in

[1] Genetic Studies of Genius. Volume II, The Early Mental Traits of Three Hundred Geniuses, Part II, pp. 223–710, Catherine Marie Cox. Stanford University Press, Stanford University, California, 1926, p. 218.

the days of their youth. Fun will have to be recognized as recreation, not the main business of life, even in childhood.

Another erroneous belief which most young people hold is that youth is the happiest part of life. This is the idea which underlies the common adage, "You are only young once." The fact is, that recent investigations show that the years twenty-five to sixty are happier than youth and that infancy is the most unhappy age of life. Furthermore, the level of happiness in maturity is in large part determined by how thoroughly the years of youth have been used in preparation for one's best potential achievement. Many of our young people rush madly from one pleasure to another, fully convinced that when maturity is reached the happiest days of life are over. Convinced of the truth, however, they will rise to its challenge and give an entirely new meaning to the truism, "You are only young once."

A fourth delusion is one to which reference has been made several times. Its most common expression among teen-agers is, "We are old enough to take care of ourselves." This, of course, makes them very difficult to teach, especially in the social and moral areas of their lives. There are many studies of maturity now completed which prove conclusively that full maturity is not reached until far beyond the high school level. One of them indicates that in the upper levels of intelligence it continues to grow until about the age of fifty. Unfortunately, it is characteristic of the human mind to regard its judgments as mature at any age level, even during the kindergarten years. Our youth, then, must come to recognize the extent of their immaturity and seek with far greater diligence the wisdom of their elders. It is failure to recognize this fact that has made each generation fail to improve very much over its predecessor. Youth will achieve new levels of social and moral progress only if it first masters what has gone before and then builds on that.

The fifth of these false beliefs characteristic of youth is that spiritual and social laws are pretty much a matter of arbitrary and often inhibiting rules of behavior. It usually does not occur to them that the laws of social behavior are as inherent in the very nature of things as the natural laws. Most of them have never

heard of the law of vicarious sacrifice. The lessons designed for the high school age in the Character Research Project set forth principles based on the philosophy of Jesus of which they never dreamed. They are challenged to make our generation "old fashioned," not as a protest against our social and moral controls, but by learning all that we can teach them about these laws and then going on to build a new social order far superior to ours.

Granted that this vision seems almost unattainable as one watches the vandalism and apparent uncontrollability of our modern youth. It is not easy to imagine our pleasure-bent high school young people entering with enthusiasm into a difficult program, adding to their already overcrowded daily lives. Nor do they seem likely to accept readily the fact of their immaturity, or that happiness comes from work more than from fun, or that maturity brings greater happiness than youth, or that their future achievement depends on their having confidence in the superior wisdom of their elders. The outlook for such a generation of youth may seem dark indeed.

On the contrary, the exploratory investigations in the Character Research Project indicate that these very things can be achieved. There is not one of them which has not been fully learned and accepted by some youth group. We have yet far to go in finding all the laws governing the motivation of youth. The evidence is overwhelming, however, that these laws will be and indeed are being found. Let me describe a few experiences which we have had in the Character Research Project which give us reason to be optimistic in this problem of gaining the coöperation of youth.

Here is a group of junior high school children who have been shown that their immediate interests will probably not be their adult interests. This in turn has made them realize that their present plans for the future—usually involving adventure and thrill—will seldom be their adult vocational choices. They have been challenged, by means of tests and other guidance procedures, to find out what their native endowments indicate actually will be the best fields of endeavor for them to look forward to. This they have done and are planning their school work and making other

preparations toward those goals. Consider the tremendous possibilities in terms of human achievement which could come if all junior high school young people aimed toward their real goals instead of the childish ones they usually dream of at this age.

This story is placed first, because it illustrates a basic reason for the difficulty of the problem. The secret of the success of this venture was in convincing these children of their immaturity. A strong tendency common to most of us is to have the utmost confidence in our own judgment. It begins at two or three years of age and continues throughout life. Knowing what we do not know is probably the hardest of all lessons to learn. Yet it can be done.

Here is a high school graduating class. The commencement speaker tells them in brutally frank terms that they are immature, in need of much discipline, and not yet capable of making many major judgments about their lives. The speaker wondered what the reaction to this might be. The result was astonishing, even to him. The class applauded enthusiastically, and most of them chose to spend the next two hours questioning him, although their dance was in progress in the next room.

Or again, on the religious side, consider the usual approach to junior high school boys in church school. We often choose a man as teacher who "knows how to be a boy." He talks mostly about yesterday's football scores, with just a minimum of very superficial religion slipped in at an unguarded moment. In a recent unit on vicarious sacrifice, the junior high school group in one of our coöperating churches was challenged to spend the next three months studying the meaning of the Cross. They were to receive a failure grade if on an examination at the end of that time they still could not define vicarious sacrifice. If they could define it but nothing more, they were to receive a "D." A "C" could be earned by reporting actual applications of it from their own daily lives. A "B" would be given them if they could find examples of it in their parents' lives. An "A" could be earned only by showing how they could plan to use it when they themselves grew up. When the examination came, all but one of them earned an "A."

One of the most promising of all our experiences comes from our largest youth group. It is a common experience among the

parents of high school young people that it is very difficult to get them to spend time on home discussions of the church school lessons. Yet in this youth group eighty per cent of the Parent Reports were turned in. When the secret of this miracle was sought, it turned out that the major motivation came from the young people themselves. They had become convinced of two things. First, they came to realize that mastery of these Christian principles was indispensable to their future happiness and usefulness. Secondly, they were convinced that these principles could not be mastered without the daily home discussions and applications of them. The result was active home coöperation of parents and their teen-agers.

Inspiring our children to seek first the kingdom of heaven is possible, if we will search long enough and hard enough for the right methods. Granted, that we have just scratched the surface. Granted that we have not yet produced men and women who do solve their problems by the blueprint of the Lord's Prayer and the principles of the Sermon on the Mount. The fact remains that wherever there is potential power, there must and can be found ways to harness that power for good.

Chapter XIX *Question Marks*

THE CHURCH COULD

Character education must find its central dynamic in religion. This means that it can never exceed the vision the Church and her leadership have for it. Leaders in secular education contend that it is the school which must do the main job. Those now applying our principles in the YMCA are confident that theirs will be the major role. No one will question either the indispensability or the great importance of the work they can do. Nevertheless, as I examine the nature of character and consider the basic essentials for its development, it is my firm belief that the central matrix for effective character education must be the Church. To be sure, the Church cannot do the job without the active coöperation of all these other institutions, including the home. But by the same token, neither can they do it without the Church.

When we consider the enormous complexity of the task, and compare it with the present program of religious education which is found in most churches, it becomes obvious that this will be the most difficult task the Church has ever undertaken and at the same time the most important challenge for her in this generation. *If the Church fails in the discharge of its character education responsibilities, it and it alone must be called to account if our present civilization is destroyed for lack of leaders trained in and motivated by the Christian philosophy of life.*

The last question mark in our discussion of probabilities, therefore, is the Church itself. Indeed, there are many different question marks within the Church. There is, of course, the local church in which most of the work is done. And within it, there is the official board, the minister, and the director of religious education all to be considered. Then there are the many aspects of the Church outside the local situation. There are the councils and boards,

seminaries and publishing houses, church leaders of every sort. No matter what the research man can accomplish, the results depend in the last analysis on the support of all these agencies.

Parents, teachers and youth itself are the workers who actually do the job. Without effective leadership, however, they are like an army without officers or any organization without a head. The Church can never rise above the calibre of its leadership. Nor will its vision be higher than that leadership inspires in it. As we conclude this survey of the possibilities of such character education being done, therefore, we may well assess the probable reactions of this leadership.

Let us begin with the leadership in the local church. Three parts of that leadership need to be examined, the minister, the official board, and the director of religious education. The first of these to be considered is, of course, the minister.

The strongest single factor in the success of our Project up to now has been the local church minister. It was Dr. Kenneth B. Welles, of the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Albany, New York, who first inspired his church to coöperate in the beginning of our actual research. Without his influence and sacrificial faith the Project would never have survived its first decade. Since that time a succession of steadfast pastors have given unstintingly of their time, influence, and thought and have contributed enormously to our progress.

It is usually the minister who first goes into the home of a new family and introduces them to the methods of the Project. It is the minister again who straightens out their first misunderstandings and inspires them to renewed effort when they become discouraged. It is he who interprets the Project to his people from the pulpit and who leads the official board in building an increasingly large vision for the character education program of the church. Because he is trained in theology as well as practical religion, he often makes significant contributions both to the curricular materials and the basic concepts of the Project. There have been a few instances in which laymen have been the moving force in bringing the Project into a church. Even then it is rare indeed if

this is achieved without the hearty approval and coöperation of the minister.

The greatest force in the success of character education is the home and the parents. But one of the strongest influences in inspiring that force is the minister. The biggest obstacle to the Project in any church is a minister who does not believe in it, or if he does, has not the courage of his convictions. On the other hand, any church can enter the Project with confidence and be completely assured of success if the minister plays his role with unfailing conviction.

The second factor in the local church is the official board. It usually has more power than any other part of the organization. Churches rise or fall according to the quality of its membership. Members of these boards are often referred to, sometimes sincerely, sometimes cynically, as the pillars of the institution. Obviously they cannot all be described alike. Such boards usually include saints and sinners, the wise and foolish, the hypocrites and the sincere, the pompous and the meek, the narrow and the broad-minded, the selfish and the generous. The power of such boards varies according to the relative proportion of these qualities in it. What is the probability that these powers behind the throne will coöperate with a character building program of such magnitude? As I look back over my total experience with them, it has made me much more optimistic than otherwise. By and large, they have consisted of men of vision and sincerity. At this writing, no church which has ever become a part of our Project has severed its relationship with it. This would never have been the case except for the faith of these boards.

The basic strength or weakness of any such body is a function of how its members reach their decisions. If "every man did that which was right in his own eyes," each with too great confidence in his own opinion, such a board must of necessity be weak, shallow, and petty. If every man is poor in spirit and makes his decisions only on the basis of extensive objective evidence, that board is strong, truly the pillars of the institution.

Being constituted of human beings it is inevitable that they will be afflicted with the common human weaknesses. The fact re-

mains that, by and large, they constitute a cross section of our finest citizenship. On the one hand, they represent the upper limits of the ability of our present educational methods to produce sons of God, but most of them would admit that they seldom ever have divinity attributed to them. On the other hand, it is on the vision of these men that the hope of the Church rests. It is not true that the Church can rise to no greater heights than they have achieved, but it is true that the Church can rise to no greater heights than they can envision.

In three ways, especially, the calibre of a church board determines the quality of its leadership. One of these relates clearly to what has been said about the scientific method. The other two have to do with the magnitude of their faith.

Their calibre is first determined by the extent to which they replace subjective opinion with objective evaluation. All that has been said throughout this book about the dangers of opinion and arm-chair thinking applies here. They need to have a deep sense of how much depends on their decisions, especially in this field of character education, and take every precaution that their decisions shall represent the will of God, as nearly as they can determine it.

Two positive policies ought to characterize their efforts to find out this will. The first one is that they ought to make sure they have brought together all of the available evidence on the issues to be decided. Evidence, not opinion, is the foundation of clear thinking. Secondly, they ought to use the principles set forth in the Lord's Prayer in an effort to make their decisions Christian.

Two common dangers in evaluating objective evidence ought to be guarded against, especially in making negative decisions. The first of these has to do with learning the will of the people whom they represent. When two or three complainers are gathered together, there will much noise be also. Before a conclusion is reached that these complaints actually depict the will of the people, a truly representative poll ought to be taken. The extreme, but all too common, case of this is where the fear of a probable complaint, even before it occurs, is allowed to delay important decisions. For example, in one church, a measure was adopted, but

with fear and trembling, because some of the board were certain that it would be bitterly opposed by the women of the church. The fact was, not one woman ever did oppose it.

The second of these dangers is that of judging a proposal, especially of such a program as the Character Research Project, by its flaws. It is a common delusion of these governing bodies that such decisions are for or against some proposal and that that is the end of the matter. Actually, most decisions are choices between alternatives. A church board does not really vote whether or not it will adopt a particular type of character education. It can only vote as to what kind of character education the church will use. And on that decision may well hang the future of its youth. Such decisions, therefore, should not be determined by the flaws in any one program, but by an over-all, comparative study of all the possible courses of action. For example, Part I of this book describes seven minimum basic essentials for effective character education. If these are valid, they constitute an effective formula for evaluating any type of character education.

The second way in which church boards demonstrate the calibre of their leadership is the extent to which they adopt a positive policy and give wholehearted allegiance to it. Divided churches are weak institutions. So also are those who try to adopt a program so devoid of dynamic that none can object to it. They ought to take some strong position and invite into the church's membership those who are challenged by such a program.

Finally, church boards can be judged by how much faith they have that what needs to be done can be done. A church board which takes up the collection first and then decides on the limits of its program can hardly be accused of being Christian, however business-like that may seem to be. The fact is, in character education at least, parents will pay for whatever they believe to be essential for their children. With an adequate budget, a genuinely effective job can be done with trained personnel to do it. The Church faces no greater handicap today than the notion that religion is free, an idea difficult to read into the teachings of Jesus.

The third post of leadership which is indispensable to effective character education in the local church is the director of religious

education. A church is always faced with the problem of securing an able and well-trained director. A recent survey indicates that being a director of religious education is one of the least secure of all professional jobs. No wonder our ablest young men and women hesitate to choose such a vocation. Must this always be so? *When once the Church realizes that its educational job is its main business, is there reason to doubt that congregations will value their educational director quite on a par in prestige and even in salary with the pastor of the church?* The strongest impetus toward this end would be a larger group of the ablest young men in our theological seminaries entering the educational rather than the preaching ministry, choosing according to their fitness for the job, of course. Likewise, more of our ablest young women must choose it. Considering the present lack of security and prestige of such positions in the Church, it will take courage and sacrifice to do so. The importance of such vision can hardly be overestimated.

The contribution which the directors in our Project churches have made is of heroic proportions. The job is usually unbelievably complex. The salary is seldom large. Most of them have felt that their training was inadequate for using all its technical methods. A few of them have worked without pay. A number of them have refused far better paying jobs to stay with the Project. Their loyalty in spite of difficulties has been inspiring. A recent Christmas card reflects both the difficulties and the rewards of doing character education of this sort.

> This card will probably be late, but why shouldn't it be? It is not part of the Character Research Project and how anyone involved in this ever finds time to do anything that is not on the "required" list, I cannot imagine. The worst part of it is, the more work one does in this program, the more he can see that should be done. There is power in this work. It has done more to make my "thinking" (and I hope, my living) Christian, than anything I have ever been privileged to see, hear or know.[1]

In a very real sense this whole book describes the duties of a director in one of our Project churches. To list in detail all of the duties falling to that office would require several chapters. Even

[1] A Christmas card from a member of the staff of one of our churches.

if a church provides secretarial assistance to handle the great load of detail for the director, the job is still a strenuous one. Without generous secretarial assistance, it is almost an impossible one.

It is the director who must train all of the staff. This is an individual job and a never-ending one, for the process of adapting particular units for use in particular classes goes on continuously. The director must gain sufficient proficiency with the technical tools of the Project to supervise their use. Enough child psychology must be learned to interpret the attitudes and guide parents and teachers in their development. Enough knowledge of mental measurements must be had to orient the church school in its use of tests and scales of various sorts, and to interpret the profiles to teachers and parents. The parent groups must be guided and stimulated. Staff and training sessions must be planned and carried out. Members of the staff must be encouraged to attend workshops and other classes. The board of education must be kept informed on desirable procedures and helped to assist in the administrative work of the Project. A more demanding job was never created. If this type of character education becomes widespread, a new type of director must emerge, with vastly more professional training, and correspondingly greater responsibilities and compensations. The director is usually the key to the local situation, without whom outstanding success is impossible.

Now let us look at the leadership outside the local church and ask what is to be said about state, district, and national leaders of religious and educational bodies? A great many of them have been actively interested in the Character Research Project. Theirs is indeed a difficult position. Their duties are usually so numerous that they have little time for exhaustive study of the many methods which arise in their field. At the same time they are expected to be able to advise their constituents as to the value of these methods. The responsibility involved is heavy indeed. One thing is certain, they dare not express final judgments about such methods until they have made a thorough study of them. A vast majority of the criticisms of our methods among religious and educational leaders and psychologists have been due to misunder-

standings, which could have been avoided by more thorough study. *None of us whose task is searching for the laws of character development can object to real criticisms. They are of genuine value to us. We can, however, object to being criticized for things we do not believe.* Every year some of these leaders attend our summer workshops and thus gain a thorough knowledge of our principles before they express an opinion about them. The leader who makes dogmatic judgments without at least this quick study betrays the responsibility which his position thrusts upon him.

Probably no group of men and women are more often tempted to make judgments based on opinion. They have been chosen to their high positions because of people's confidence in their judgment. They are asked to offer hundreds of opinions every year. It is inevitable that they find it difficult always to seek for adequate objective evidence before reaching their decisions. But by the same token, their responsibility for getting all the evidence is in direct proportion to the importance of their positions. Every national organization ought to have its research section. Every leader ought to have some source to which he can turn to provide him with all the facts. It is to this end that earlier in this book I propose a National Character Research Institute.

Such leaders are also often influenced by political expediency. It is their job to keep peace in their "families." Such motives cannot but prejudice the objectivity of their judgments. Guarding against such biases is an important mark of the great leader. In the same category comes seeking after numbers and the tendency to evaluate everything in terms of them.

One of the gravest dangers from the point of view of the Church, faced by both local and general leadership, is the matter of doing the whole job. It is common belief that all institutions ought to seek for "improvement" in their methods. In itself, this is a worthy and desirable motivation. Unfortunately, it leads at times to being satisfied with a little improvement even when the nature and value of the improvement is doubtful. In the Character Research Project, we hear from time to time of churches, who feel that they cannot assume so large an undertaking as that involved in using all of our methods, but who do adopt some of our methods. They are too

likely to choose the ones which bring the more superficial evidences of success—increased numbers, interest and enthusiasm. The only test of effective character education is proven character development. This is determined by measuring the character growth of the individual child, not merely by his interest and enthusiasm. *One of the golden images which all of us are tempted to fall down and worship is that of numbers.*

The churches which thus far have joined our Project have usually grown with astonishing rapidity. This, in itself, is no guarantee of its value. We guard rigorously against the tendencies to judge the program on this basis. Of course the defense against these dangers is measurement. As more and more accurate attitude scales and other tools for measuring character and personality traits are developed, it becomes increasingly important to use them for validating and evaluating our procedures. The Church and its leaders, then, need to make sure that their successes are not estimated in terms of the external characteristics of rally days and large crowds, but in terms of Christian principles built solidly into the lives of boys and girls.

Here, then, is the last of our question marks, the Church itself. When the Project began, my own confidence in the Church as an institution was not large. The years of the Project, however, have done much to increase that confidence. Certainly the first three churches who worked with us faced enormous difficulties and persisted even though for years they had few materials with which to work. The churches which have come in since the beginning of our curricular study have achieved educational miracles. *Until confronted with abundant evidence to the contrary, I shall believe that the Church not only could, but that it will.*

What then of the probabilities? There are, of course, the dogmatists who already subscribe to some theory and refuse to listen to any other. More dangerous are the status quo people who see no great need for improvement in themselves or their children. And, most dangerous of all are the indifferent who just cannot be bothered about it. Furthermore, the painstaking research necessary to fully validate and refine our hypotheses has hardly begun.

Our basic concepts, however, seem founded on an abundance of evidence. Our purpose throughout has been to learn the truth. If we have even partially succeeded in that effort, no opposition can destroy it. Where we have not, we shall continue to search for it. In that search, an ever-increasing group of earnest and determined men and women are joined. It consists of ministers and directors who dedicate their lives and influence to this task; parents and teachers who are willing to pay the price in weary effort, many failures and unrequited service to help us solve our basic problems; young people who see this vision and dedicate their lives to its realization; young scientists who contribute their training and talents in a new field in which security is at present almost non-existent; philanthropists who give generously of their means to a project still in its early stages; and scores of unsung heroes who wrestle with the overwhelming avalanche of dull routine that must be done. So long as I see this inner circle growing year by year, I feel confident that we must eventually succeed.

It was pointed out early in this book that we have built our methods on no dogmas. *We have, however, set forth as the backbone of our method two hypotheses.* Both of them seem so certain to be true that it would require a lot of proving to convince us that they are not. The evidence for them seems altogther too strong to be overcome. One of them is, that *if we are to discover and apply the laws that govern character, of the quality of which Jesus talked and which is indispensable to a lasting and peaceful social order, we shall have to abandon the method of arm-chair theorizing and use the scientific method.* Our second hypothesis is that *basically the Christian philosophy of life is the one on which the noblest character of which human nature is capable can be built.*

The great need in exploring all the possibilities of these two hypotheses is that of highly skilled research workers. They must be scholars trained in both science and religion. This means that able students must be prepared to spend as much as six years of graduate study in gaining proficiency in these two fields. At present, there is no guarantee of established positions for them nor even of research opportunities. This means that such a venture must be one based on the faith that he who has the courage to

seek the truth will be given the means to find it. *A golden text in our Project has come to be, A difficulty is a problem to be solved, not an insurmountable obstacle.*

Here, then, is the picture of human potential, of the character education methods for achieving it, and of those facts which give promise of success or failure, the probabilities. In my community is being built a huge laboratory for atomic research. It will cost in its building and operation many millions of dollars. The amount spent today on character research is only a drop in the bucket compared to this. Scientists tell us there is no defense against the atomic bomb. Such is not the case; there is—character! *Only character research can make the atomic bomb obsolete and guarantee that this atomic research laboratory shall be for man's happiness, not man's destruction.* Let us then be done with our solemn assemblies and learned committees of opinion and arm-chair philosophies. Let us throw all our resources into using Jesus' own method for discovering the will of God for men's lives, so that we can build the kind of personality of which Jesus dreamed when he said, "Greater things than these shall ye do," a prophecy which has not yet been, but still may be, fulfilled.

AN INDEX OF
THE QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK

I. GENERAL QUESTIONS

The Nature of Character Education

What is the basic nature of character education? 66–69

What is the central basic philosophy of this Project? 148–149

Are there scientific laws of character development? 9–10, 16–17

What is the relationship between science and religion? 65

Can the scientific method contribute to religion? 5–8

Will the scientific method ever really be applied to character education? 61

Can effective character education be done without religion? Chap. XI, 70–75

What is a scientific program of character education like? Chap. XIV, 89–99

Who have made the major scientific contributions to character education? 53f.

How can church boards evaluate various methods of religious education? 142–144

Concerning Human Nature

How much can we expect from human nature? 1–4

Can human nature be changed? 4–6, Chap. VI, 44–47

Do we inherit a dependable conscience? 86–87

How clearly do people think? 57–60

How reliable is subjective opinion? 57–58

Worship in Character Education

What is the place of worship in character education? Chap. XV, 100–105

What is the relationship between science and worship? 102–103

What is the relationship between liturgy and worship? 101–105

Concerning Trait Theory

What is the nature of the trait theory used in this Project? Chap. III, 19–21

Can a scientific theory of traits be developed? 22–26

Is a trait theory necessary, or can character education be done as a secondary result of all education? 24–26

Are the traditional character traits possible to develop? 23–24

Practical Problems

What are the probabilities that we can produce, in time, sufficiently strong character to save our modern civilization? Chap. IX, 56–61, 65f.

What qualities can we give our children which will make them a greater generation? Chap. XII, 76–82

Can simple methods of character education be effective? 54

Will churches grow in size if they use this method? 147

The Problems of Curriculum

How are character traits learned? 10–17

How can the scientific method be applied in developing curricula for character education? 39–42, 59

What kinds of curricular materials are essential for effective character education? 91–94

What part do individual differences play in character education? Chap. V, 35–43, 94–96

Can curricula be standardized in a program based on individual differences? 36–39

Can a genuinely child-centered curriculum be developed? 94–98

How does memorizing Biblical material relate to character education? 11

How can religious education be made effective in daily life? 13–16

What has vocational training to do with religion? 33–34

How can we know what things can be taught to children at the various age levels? Chap. IV, 28–34

Can religious materials be taught to preschool children? 28–29

What is the place of the Lord's Prayer in character education? 102–105

What about Other Institutions than the Church School?

How much coöperation is necessary between the various character building agencies? Chap. VII, 49–52, 87–88, 98–99

What role can be played by the public schools? 43, 98–99

What about the role of the YMCA and other similar youth agencies? 49, 98–99

What about the influence of movies, radio, and other entertainment enterprises on character? 98f.

II. QUESTIONS ASKED BY CHURCH LEADERS

Religion in Character Education

What is the general nature of Jesus' philosophy of character? Chap. XI, 70–75

What is the relationship between science and religion? 65

Can character education be done without religion? 66, 139

Did Jesus teach negative ethics? 72–75, 84

What concept of Christian faith is used in this Project? 78–79

What concept of Christian love is used in this Project? 79–82

What about the place of conversion in character education? 29–33

Some Practical Problems

How shall character-building institutions decide which theory of character education to use? 52, 54, 76, 110–111

Can simple methods of character education be effective? 54

Are tests necessary in character education? 37–38, 43

Must content be sacrificed in a child-centered program? 97, 111

How are Biblical materials to be used effectively in character education? 44–46, 84–86, 111

Should children be required to go to church school if they do not want to? 129

Can religious materials be taught to preschool children? 28–29

What is the place of the Lord's Prayer in character education? 102–105

The Role of the Professional Church Leadership

What is the part of the minister in the character education of the church? 140–141

What is the role of the local church board in character education? 141–144

What is the part of the local director of religious education in this type of project? 144–145

What will be the attitude of our national church leadership toward such a project? 146–147

Will churches grow in size if they use this method? 147

III. QUESTIONS PARENTS ASK

Questions about Methods

How are character traits learned? 10–17

How can parents be sure that they have really taught a character trait? 17–18

What can be done with the average child? 36f.

How does memorizing Biblical materials relate to learning in character education? 11

How can we teach traits like persistence and dependability? 31–33

Should children be required to go to church school? 129

Must content be sacrificed in a child-centered program? 97

The Parents' Role

What kind of coöperation must be had from parents? 17, 41, 90–91, 112–117

What are the chances of getting parent coöperation of sufficient magnitude? 66, Chap. XVI, 106–117

Is parent coöperation necessary at the high school level? 110

How are parents to be trained for the home task of character education? 114–116

What is done in the parent-teacher interviews? 121–122, 124–125

What kind of parent-teacher coöperation is necessary for effective character education? 90–91, 121–122

IV. QUESTIONS TEACHERS ASK

The Teacher's Task in this Project

What is required of teachers in this program? 41, 90–91, Chap. XVII, 118–127

How important is the teacher in this seven-day-a-week method? 118–119

How much time is required of the teacher? 118–120

How are teachers to be trained for these difficult methods of character education? 114–116, 121–125

What are the Adaptation Procedure and the Teacher's Record Form? 94–96

How many teachers are necessary? 121–127

Can people be persuaded to teach in church schools which require so much of them? 125–127

Concerning Method

How are character traits learned? 10–17

What part do individual differences play in character education? Chap. V, 35–43, 94–96

How can group materials be prepared if the emphasis is on individual differences? 46–47

How does memorizing Biblical materials relate to learning in character education? 11

How can we teach persistence and dependability? 31–33

What kind of parent-teacher coöperation is necessary for effective character education? 90–91, 121–122

What is required in parent-teacher interviews? 121–122, 124–125

V. QUESTIONS YOUTH ASK

What factors determine youth's interest in character education? 126–133

How can we enlist the coöperation of youth in so difficult a program? 133–136

Can youth ever be persuaded to behave any differently than youth has always done? Chap. XVIII, 128–138

Are our modern youth entirely pleasure bent? 136–138

What is the relationship between fun and happiness? 134

Is youth the happiest age of life? 135